

# **FAMOUS STORIES OF THE SEA AND SHIPS**

*Also edited by* Leonard Gribble

FAMOUS STORIES OF HIGH ADVENTURE

FIFTY FAMOUS STORIES FOR BOYS

FIFTY FAMOUS STORIES FOR GIRLS

FIFTY FAMOUS ANIMAL STORIES

# *Famous Stories of* **THE SEA AND SHIPS**

*Selected and Edited by*  
**LEONARD GRIBBLE**

*with illustrations by Suzanna Rust*



**ARTHUR BARKER LIMITED**

**20 NEW BOND STREET LONDON W1**

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
SET IN 11-ON-12 POINT BASKERVILLE  
BY G. TINLING AND CO. LTD.  
LIVERPOOL, LONDON AND PRESCOT

27/5210

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## *Preface*

It is not surprising that an island people, like the British, should be interested in ships and the oceans through which they sail. Indeed, this interest is shared by all English-speaking countries, and it has been their love of the deep waters and fellow-feeling for mariners that inspired so many of their writers to let their imaginations sail full-rigged across both tide and time.

Here are nearly a score of their stories featuring the sea, its ships, and the men who made them either a career or a home, and sometimes both. They are stories with a wide range of appeal. Some belong to legend and even mythology, others are recorded history. Some are stories written to excite and entertain the reader, others are calculated to win his sympathy or touch his pride.

In their several ways all are stimulating, for very seldom can an honestly told sea story prove dull or lacking in real interest. The sea has a magic denied the plains and hills beyond the coasts against which it breaks. Because it remains in wide areas unfathomable, and therefore unconquered by man's daring and unexplored by his probing curiosity, it has a mystery all its own.

Man has scaled Everest and flown over other lonely peaks hitherto inaccessible, but the ocean still has its fastnesses where man has never ventured and returned. Indeed, it is possible that man may find his way to the moon and back before he has learned the true depths of the oceans over which he sails, and today also flies. Yet these oceans make up four-fifths of man's physical world.

The sea, therefore, is a perpetual challenge. For this reason it will always fascinate the adventurous, as a magnet fascinates steel. Especially those who like adventurous reading.

In this book is an abundance of such adventurous reading for lovers of the sea and ships. The stories include every aspect of the hazards and challenges of going down to the sea in ships.

No youngster—or anyone young in heart, for that matter—who thrills to the sound and sight of waves breaking on a beach, or to a glimpse of sail or smoke on an unbroken horizon, can fail to be enthralled by these narratives by master story-tellers.

Not all the stories are fiction. Some are factual, and these are by no means the least gripping. But all of them will be as fresh tomorrow as they were yesterday, and all are worth not only reading, but reading again.



## *An Atlantic Mutiny*

W. CLARK RUSSELL

YOUNG Royle is the second mate of the *Grosvenor*, a full-rigged ship of five hundred tons, outward bound from England across the Atlantic. After a storm, and in opposition to his captain, he takes a boat to a wallowing wreck and brings off an old man and his daughter. He is punished for such insubordination, but almost immediately is caught up in a mutiny, brought on by the bullying of the *Grosvenor's* chief mate, Duckling, and the bad food provided by Captain Coxon. Because he has shown himself sympathetic to the crew's complaints, the second mate is asked by the mutineers to navigate the ship. It is with very mixed feelings that he complies. This story is told by Royle himself. His further adventures on a strange and memorable voyage are related in *The Wreck of the "Grosvenor"*, from which this story is taken.

The ship, now lying over, shut the wreck out, and I shifted my clothes as speedily as I could, being anxious to hear what Captain Coxon should say to me. I was also curious to see the old man and girl, and learn what treatment the captain was showing them. I remember it struck me, just at this time, that the girl was in a very awkward position; for here she was on board a vessel without any female to serve her for a companion and lend her clothes, which she would stand seriously in need of, as those she had on her were wringing wet. The memory of her refined and pretty face, with the amber hair about it, and her wild, soft, piteous blue eyes, haunted me; and I tried to think what could be done to make her comfortable.

I was pulling on a boot when there came a knock at the door of the cabin, and in stepped the carpenter, Stevens, holding in his hand a bar of iron with a collar at either end, and one collar fastened with a padlock. Close behind the carpenter came Duckling, who immediately said, "Captain Coxon's orders are to put you in irons. Carpenter, clap those belayers on his damned shins."

I jumped off the chest on which I was seated, not with the intention of resisting, but of remonstrating; but Duckling, mistaking the action, drew a pistol out of his side-pocket, and presenting it at my head, said: "By the Eternal! if you don't let the carpenter do his work, I'll shoot you dead—so mind!"

"You're a ruffian and a bully!" said I; "but I'll keep my life if only to punish you and your master!"

Saying which, I reseated myself, folding my arms resolutely, and suffered the carpenter to lock the irons on my ankles, keeping my eyes fixed on Duckling with an expression of the utmost scorn and dislike in them.

"Now," said he, "you infernal mutinous hound! I reckon you'll not give us much trouble for the rest of the voyage."

This injurious language was more than my temper could brook. Scarcely knowing what I did, I threw myself against him, caught his throat, and dashed him violently down upon the deck. The pistol exploded in his hand as he fell.

"Carpenter," I cried furiously, "open that door!"

The fellow obeyed me instantly, and walked out of the cabin. Duckling lay pretty well stunned upon the deck; but

in a few moments he would have been up and at me, and, hampered as I was by the irons, he must have mastered me easily. I shambled over to where he lay, dragged him upright, and pitched him with a crash through the open door against the cuddy table. He struck it heavily and rolled under it, and I then slammed the door and sat down, feeling faint and quite exhausted of breath.

The door had not been closed two minutes when it was partially opened, and a friendly hand (the boatswain's, as I afterwards learnt) placed a pannikin of rum-and-water on the deck, and a voice said, "They'll not let you be here long, sir." The door was then shut again; and very thankful for a refreshment of which I stood seriously in need, I got hold of the pannikin and swallowed the contents.

I now tried to reflect upon my situation, but found it impossible to do so, as I could not guess what intentions the captain had against me and what would be the result of my conflict with Duckling. For some minutes I sat expecting to see the chief mate rush in on me; and, in anticipation of a struggle with a coward who would have me almost at his mercy, I laid hold of a sea-boot, very heavy, with an iron-shod heel, and held it ready to strike at the bully's head should he enter. However, in about a quarter of an hour's time I saw him through my cabin window pass along the main-deck, with a blue lump over his right eye, while the rest of his face shone with soap, which he must have used without stint to rid his features of the blood that had smeared them. Whether the report of the pistol had been heard or not I could not tell; but no notice appeared to be taken of it. I observed a number of the crew just under the fore-castle conversing in a very earnest manner, and sometimes looking towards my cabin.

There was something very gross and brutal in this treatment to which I was subjected, and there was a contempt in it for me, suggested by the skipper sending Duckling to see me in irons, instead of logging me to my face and acting in a ship-shape fashion in putting me under arrest, which galled me extremely. The very irons on my legs were not such as are ordinarily used on board ship, and looked as if they had been picked up cheap in some rag and slop shop in South America

or in the West Indies, for I think I had seen such things in pictures of truculent negro slaves. I was in some measure supported by the reflection that the crew sympathized with me, and would not suffer me to be cruelly used; but the idea of a mutiny among them gave me no pleasure, for the skipper was sure to swear that I was the ringleader, and Duckling would of course back his statements.

I was growing rather faint with hunger, for it was past my usual dinner-hour, and I had done enough work to account for a good appetite.

The captain was eating his dinner in the cuddy; for I not only smelt the meat, but heard his voice addressing the steward, who was, perhaps, the only man in the ship who showed any kind of liking for him. I tried to hear if the old man or the girl were with him, but caught no other voice. I honestly prayed that the captain would act humanely towards them; but I had my doubts, for he was certainly a cold-blooded, selfish rascal.

By-and-by I heard Duckling's voice, showing that the captain had gone on deck. This man, either wanting the tact of his superior or hating me more bitterly (which I admit was fair, seeing how I had punished him), said in a loud voice to the steward—

“What fodder is that mutinous dog yonder to have?”

The steward spoke low and I did not hear him.

“Serve the skunk right,” continued the chief mate. “By glory, if there was only a pair of handcuffs on board they should be on him. How's this lump?”

The steward replied, and Mr. Duckling continued—

“I guess the fellow at the wheel grinned when he saw it. But I'll be raising bigger lumps than this on some of 'em before I'm done.”

Shortly after this, Duckling came out on to the main-deck, and observing me looking through the window, bawled at the top of his voice for the carpenter, who presently came, and Duckling, pointing to my window, gave him some instructions, which he went away to execute. A young ordinary seaman—an Irish lad named Driscoll—was coiling a rope over one of the belaying-pins around the mainmast. Duckling pointed up aloft, and his voice sounded, though I did not hear the order.

The lad waited to coil the rest of the rope—a fathom or so—before obeying: whereupon Duckling hit him a blow on the back, slued him round, caught him by the throat, and backed him savagely against the starboard bulwarks, roaring, in language quite audible to me now—“Up with you, you skulker! I’ll teach you to wait when I give an order. Up with you, I say, or I’ll pound you to pieces.”

At this moment the carpenter approached my window, provided with a hammer and couple of planks, which he proceeded to nail upon the framework. Duckling watched him with a grin upon his ugly face. I was now in comparative darkness; for the port-hole admitted but little light, and, unlike the rest of the cuddy berths, my cabin had no bull’s-eye.

I reached the door with a great deal of trouble, for the iron bar hampered my movements excessively, and found it locked outside; but by whom and when I did not know, for I had not heard the key turned. But I might depend that Duckling had done this with cat-like stealthiness, and that he probably had the key in his pocket.

I was hungry enough to have felt grateful for a biscuit, and had half a mind to sing out to the steward to bring me something to eat, but reflected that my doing so might only provoke an insulting answer from the fellow. With some difficulty I pulled the mattress out of the cot and put it into the bunk, as my pinioned legs would not enable me to climb or spring, and laid down and presently fell asleep.

I slept away the greater part of the afternoon: for when I awoke, the sky, as I saw it through the port-hole, was dark with the shadow of evening. A strong wind was blowing and the ship laying heavily over to it, by which I might know she was carrying a heap of canvas.

I looked over the edge of the bunk, and saw on the deck near the door a tin dish, containing some common ship’s biscuit and a can of cold water. I was so hungry that I jumped up eagerly to get the biscuit, by doing which I so tweaked my ankles with the irons, that the blood came from the broken skin. I made shift to reach the biscuit, which proved to be the ship’s bread as served to the men, and ate greedily, being indeed famished; but speedily discovered the substantial

grounds of complaint the sailors had against the ship's stores; for the biscuit was intolerably mouldy and rotten, and so full of weevils, that nothing but hunger could have induced me to swallow the abomination. I managed to devour a couple of these things, and drank some water; and then pulled out my pipe and began to smoke, caring little about the skipper's objection to this indulgence in the saloon, and heartily wishing he would come to the cabin that I might tell him what I thought of his behaviour.

As the evening advanced the wind freshened, and I heard the captain giving orders just over my head, and the hands shortening sail. The skipper was again straining the ship heavily: the creaking and groaning in the cuddy was incessant: and every now and again I heard the boom of a sea against the vessel's side, and the sousing rush of water on deck. But after the men had been at work some time, the vessel laboured less and got upon a more even keel.

Two bells (nine o'clock) had been struck, when I was suddenly attracted by a sound of hammering upon the scuttle in my cabin. I turned my head hastily; but as it was not only dark inside, but dark without, I could discern nothing, and concluded that the noise had been made on the deck overhead.

After an interval of a minute the hammering was repeated, and now it was impossible for me to doubt that it was caused by something hard, such as the handle of a knife being struck upon the thick glass of the scuttle. I was greatly astonished; but remembering that the main-chains extended away from this port-hole, I easily concluded that some one had got down into them and was knocking to draw my attention.

I hoisted my legs out of the bunk with very great difficulty, and having got my feet upon the deck, drew myself to the scuttle, but with much trouble, it being to windward, and the deck sloping to a considerable angle. Not a glimmer of light penetrated my cabin from the cuddy: and whether the sky outside was clear or not, I only know that the prospect seen through the scuttle, buried in the thickness of the ship's wall, was pitch dark.

I twisted the screw that kept the scuttle closed, and it blew

open, and a rush of wind, concentrated by the narrowness of the aperture through which it penetrated, blew damp with spray upon my face.

Fearful of my voice being heard in the cuddy—for this was the hour when the spirits were put upon the table, and it was quite likely that Coxon or Duckling might be seated within, drinking alone—I muffled my voice between my hands and asked who was there?

The fellow jammed his face so effectually into the port-hole as to exclude the wind, so that the whisper in which he spoke was quite distinct.

“Mc—Stevens, the carpenter. I’ve come from the crew. But you’re to take your solemn oath you’ll not split upon us if I tell you what’s goin’ to happen?”

“I am not in a position to split,” I replied. “But I can make no promises until I know your intentions.”

The man was a long time silent. Several times he withdrew his face, as I knew (for I could not see him) by the rush of wind that came in, to shake himself free of the spray that broke over him.

“It’s just this,” he said, bunting up the port-hole again. “We’d rather take a twelvemonth imprisonment ashore, in the worst gaol in England, than work this wessel on the rotten food we’re obliged to eat. What we want to know is, will you take charge o’ the ship and carry her where we tells yer, if we give you command?”

I was too much startled by this question to reply at once. There came quickly considerations of the danger of mutiny on board ship, of the sure excesses of men made reckless by liberty and freed from the discipline which, though their passions might protest against it, their still stronger instincts admitted and obeyed.

“Give us your answer,” said the man. “If the chief mate looks over, he’ll see me.”

“I cannot consent,” I replied. “I am as sorry for the crew as I am for myself. But things are better as they are.”

“By——!” exclaimed the man in a violent, hoarse whisper, “we don’t mean to let ’em be as they are. We’ve put up with a bit too much as it is. We’ll find a way of making you consent—

see to that! And if you peach on us we're still too strong for you—so mind your life!"

Saying which he withdrew his head; and after waiting a short time to see if he remained, I closed the port, and shuffled into my bunk again.

I tried to think how I should act.

If I acquainted the captain with the carpenter's disclosure the men would probably murder me. And though they withheld from bloodshed, my putting the captain on his guard would not save the ship if the men were determined to seize her, because he could not count on more than two men to side with him, and the crew would overpower them immediately.

The one thing I heartily prayed for was that murder might not be done; but I did not anticipate great violence, as I imagined that the crew had no other object in rebelling than to compel the captain to put into the nearest port to exchange the stores.

The night wore away very slowly, and I counted every bell that was struck. The wind decreased at midnight, and I heard Duckling go into the captain's cabin and rouse him up, the captain evidently having undertaken my duties. Duckling reported the weather during his watch, and said, "The wind is dropping, but it looks dirty to the south'ard. If we lose the breeze we may get it fresh from t'other quarter, and she can't hurt under easy sail until we see what's going to do."

They then went on deck together, and in about ten minutes' time Duckling returned and went into his cabin, closing the door noisily.

A little after one o'clock I fell into a doze, but was shortly after awakened by hearing the growl of voices close against my cabin, my apprehensions making my hearing very sensitive, even in sleep.

In a few moments the voices of the men were silenced, and I then heard the tread of footsteps in the cuddy going aft, and some one as he passed tried the handle of my door.

Another long interval of silence followed; and as I did not hear the men who had entered the cuddy return, I wondered where they had stationed themselves, and what they were doing. As to myself, the irons on my legs made me quite helpless.

The time that now passed seemed an eternity, and I was beginning to wonder whether the voices I had heard might not have been Coxon's and the steward's—all was so quiet—when a step sounded overhead, and the captain's voice rang out, "Lay aft, some hands, and brail up the spanker!"

Instantly several men ran up the starboard poop-ladder, proving that they must have been stationed close against my cabin, and their heavy feet clattered along the deck, and I heard their voices singing. Scarce were their voices hushed when a shrill whistle, like a sharp human squeal, was raised forwards, and immediately there was a sharp twirl and scuffle of feet on the deck, followed by a groan and a fall. At the same moment a door was forced open in the cuddy, and, as I might judge by what followed, a body of men tumbled into the chief mate's cabin. A growling and yelping of fierce human voices followed. "Haul him out of it by the hair!"—"You blackguard! you'll show fight, will yer! Take that for yourself!"—"Over the eyes next time, Bill! Let me get at the——!"

But, as I imagined, the muscular, infuriate chief mate would not fall an easy prey, fighting as he deemed for his life. I heard the thump of bodies swung against the panelling, fierce execrations, the smash of crockery, and the heavy breathing of men engaged in deadly conflict.

It was brief enough in reality, though Duckling seemed to find them work for a good while.

"Don't kill him now! Wait till dere's plenty ob light!" howled a voice, which I knew to be the cook's. And then they came along the cuddy, dragging the body which they had either killed or knocked insensible after them, and got upon the main-deck.

"Poop, ahoy!" shouted one of them. "What cheer up there, mates?"

"Right as a trivet!—ready to sling astern!" came the answer directly over my head, followed by some laughter.

As I lay holding my breath, scarcely knowing what was next to befall, the handle of my door was tried, the door pushed, then shaken passionately, after which a voice, in tones which might have emanated from a ghost, exclaimed—

"Mr. Royle, they have killed the captain and Mr. Duckling!"

For God Almighty's sake, ask them to spare my life! They will listen to you, sir! For God's sake, save me!"

"Who are you?" I answered.

"The steward, sir."

But as he said this one of the men on the quarter-deck shouted, "Where's the steward? He's as bad as the others! He's the one what swore the pork was sweet!"

And then I heard the steward steal swiftly away from my cabin door and some men come into the cuddy. They would doubtless have hunted him down there and then, but one of them unconsciously diverted the thoughts of the others by exclaiming—

"There's the second mate in there. Let's have him out of it."

My cabin door was again tried, and a heavy kick administered.

"It's locked, can't you see?" said one of the men.

As it opened into the cuddy it was not to be forced, so one of them exclaimed that he would fetch a mallet and a caulking-iron, with which he returned in less than a couple of minutes, and presently the lock was smashed to pieces, and the door fell open.

Both swinging-lamps were alight in the cuddy, and one, being nearly opposite my cabin, streamed fairly into it. I was seated erect in my bunk when the men entered, and I immediately exclaimed, pointing to the irons, "I am glad you have thought of me. Knock those things off, will you?"

I believe there was something in the cool way in which I pronounced these words that as fully persuaded them that I was intent upon the mutiny as any action I could have committed.

"We'll not take long to do that for you," cried the fellow who held the mallet (a formidable weapon, by the way, in such hands!). "Get upon the deck, and I'll swaller this iron if you aren't able to dance a breakdown in a jiffy!"

I dropped out of the bunk, and with two blows the man cut off the staple, and I kicked the irons off.

"Now, my lads," said I, beginning to play the part I had made up my mind to act whilst listening to the onslaught on the captain and Duckling; "what have you done?"

The fellow who had knocked off the irons, and now answered me, was named Cornish, a man in my own watch.

"The ship's ours—that's what we've done," he said.

"The skipper's dead as a nail up there, I doubt," exclaimed another, indicating the poop with a movement of the head; "and if you'll step on to the main-deck you'll see how we've handled Mister Duckling!"

"And what do *you* mean to do?" exclaimed a man, one of the four who had accompanied me to the wreck. "*We're* masters now, I suppose you know, and so I hope you aren't agin us."

At this moment the carpenter, followed by a few others, came shoving into the cuddy.

"Oh, there he is!" he cried.

He grasped me by the arm and led me out of the cabin, and bidding me stand at the end of the table, with my face looking aft, ran to the door, and bawled at the top of his voice, "Into the cuddy, all hands!"

Those who were on the poop came scuffling along, dragging something with them, and presently rose a cry of "one—two—three!" and there was a soft thud upon the main-deck—the body of the captain, in fact, pitched off the poop—and then the men came running in and stood in a crowd on either side the table.

This was a scene I am not likely ever to forget, nor the feelings excited in me by it.

The men were variously dressed, some in yellow sou'westers, some in tight-fitting caps, in coarse shirts, in suits of oil-skin, in liberally patched monkey-jackets. Some of them, with black beards and moustachios and burnt complexions, looked swarthy and sinister enough in the lamplight; some were pale with the devilish spirit that had been aroused in them; every face, not excepting the youngest of the ordinary seamen, wore a passionate, reckless, malignant look. They ran their eyes over the cuddy as strangers would, and one of them took a glass off a swinging tray, and held it high, saying grimly, "By the Lord! we'll have something fit to swallow now! No more starvation and stinking water!"

I noticed the boatswain—named Forward—the only quiet

face in the crowd. He met my eye, and instantly looked down.

"Now, Mr. Royle," said the carpenter, "we're all ekals here, with a furst-rate execootioner among us (pointing to the big sailor, Johnson), as knows, when he's axed, how to choke off individuals as don't make theirselves sootable to our feelin's. What we're all here collected for to discover is this—are you with us or agin us?"

"With you," I replied, "in everything but murder."

Some of them growled, and the carpenter exclaimed hastily—

"We don't know what you call murder. We aren't used to them sort o' expressions. What's done has happened, ain't it? And I *have* heerd tell of accidents, which is the properest word to conwey our thoughts."

He nodded at me significantly.

"Look here," said I. "Just a plain word with you before I am asked any more questions. There's not a man among you who doesn't know that I have been warm on your side ever since I learnt what kind of provisions you were obliged to eat. I have had words with the captain about your stores, and it is as much because of my interference in that matter as because of my determination not to let a woman die upon a miserable wreck that he clapped me in irons. I don't know what you mean to do with me, but I'll not say I don't care. I do care. I value my life, and in the hope of saving it I'll tell you this, and it's God's truth—that if you take my life you'll be killing a man who, had he comanded this vessel, would have shifted your provisions long ago."

I folded my arms and gazed fixedly at the carpenter.

They broke into various exclamations.

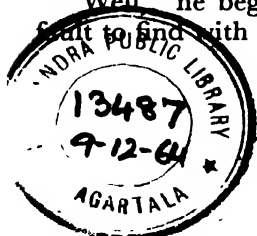
"We know all that."

"We don't owe *you* no grudge."

"We don't want your life. Just show us what to do—that's what it is."

I appeared to pay no attention to their remarks, but kept my eyes resolutely bent on Stevens, the carpenter, that they might see I accepted him as their mouthpiece, and would deal only with him.

"Well," he began, "what you say is correct, and we've no fault to find with you. What I says to you this evenin' through



the scuttle I says now—will you navigate this here wessel for us to the port as we've agreed on? and if you'll do that you can choose officers out of us, and we'll do your bidding as though you was lawful skipper, and trust to you. But I say now, and I says it before all hands here, that if you take us where we don't want to go, or put us in the way of any man-o'-war, or try in any manner to bring us to book for this here job, so help me, Mr. Royle, and that's your name as mine is William Stevens, and I say it before all hands here, we'll sling you overboard as sartin as there's hair growing on your head—we will; we'll murder you out an' out. All my mates is a followin' of me—so you'll please mind that!"

"I hear you," I replied, "and will do your bidding, but on this condition—that having killed the captain you will swear to me that no more lives shall be sacrificed."

"By Gor, no!" shouted the cook. "Don't swear dat! Wait till by-um-by."

"Be avised by me!" I cried, seizing the fellow's frightful meaning, and dreading the hideous scene it portended. "We have an old man and a young girl on board. Are they safe?"

"Yes," answered several voices; and the cook jabbered, "Yes, yes!" with horrid contortions of the face, under the impression that I had mistaken his interruption.

"Look here! I am a single man against many," I said; "but I am not afraid to speak out—because I am an Englishman speaking to Englishmen, with one bloodthirsty yellow savage among you!" There was a shout of laughter. "I implore you not to stain your hands with blood. Hear me!"

"We'll let the steward go!" cried a voice; "but we want our revenge upon Duckling, and we'll have it. Damn your sermons!"

The ominous growling of angry men muttering altogether arose; in the midst of which the fellow who was steering left the wheel to sing out through the skylight—

"It's as black as thunder to leeward. Better stand by, or the ship'll be aback!"

"Now what am I to do?" I exclaimed.

"We give you command. Out with your orders—we'll obey 'em," came the answer.

In a few moments I was on the poop. By the first glance I threw upwards I saw that the ship was already aback.

"Port your helm—hard  $\frac{1}{2}$  port!" I shouted. "Let go the port-braces fore and aft! Round with the yards smartly!"

Fortunately not only was the first coming of the wind light, but the canvas on the ship was comparatively small. The mainsail, cross-jack, the three royals, two top-gallant sails, spanker, flying and outer jibs were furled, and there was a single reef in the fore and mizzen topsails. The yards swung easily and the sails filled, and not knowing what course to steer, I braced the yards up sharp and kept her close.

The sky to the south looked threatening, and the night was very dark. I ran below to look at the glass, and found a slight fall, but nothing to speak of. This being so, I thought we might hold on with the topsails as they were for the present, and ordered the top-gallant sail to be furled. The men worked with great alacrity, singing out lustily; indeed, it was difficult for me, standing on the poop and giving orders, to realize the experiences of the last hour: and yet I might know, by the strange trembling and inward and painful feeling of faintness which from time to time seized me, that both my moral and physical being had received a terrible shock, and that I should feel the reality more keenly when my excitement was abated, and I should have no other occupation than to think.

The only food I had taken all day was the two ship's biscuits, and feeling the need of some substantial refreshment to relieve me of the sensation of faintness, I left the poop to seek the carpenter, in order to request him to keep watch whilst I went below.

When on the quarter-deck and looking towards the cuddy, I perceived two figures huddled together just outside the cuddy door. There was plenty of light here from the lamps inside, and I at once saw that the two bodies were those of Duckling and Coxon.

I stepped up to them. Coxon lay on his back his face exposed, and Duckling was right across him, breast downwards, his head in the corner and his feet towards me. There was no blood on either of them. Coxon had evidently been struck over the head from behind and killed instantly; his

features were composed, and his grey hairs made him look a reverend object in death.

Some men on the main-deck watched me looking at the bodies, and when they saw me take Duckling by the arm and turn him on his back, one of them called: "That's right; keep the beggar alive! he's cookee's portion, he is!"

These exclamations attracted the attention of the carpenter, who came aft immediately and found me stooping over Duckling.

"He's dead, I reckon," he said.

"Dead, or next door to it," I replied. "Better for him if he is dead. The captain's a corpse, killed quickly enough, by the look of him," I continued, gazing at the white, still face at my feet. "You had better get him carried forward and covered up."

He answered, giving the captain's body a kick, "Why do you want him covered up? Let him go overboard now, won't 'ee? Hi, mates!" he called to the men who were looking on. "Here's another witness agin us for the Day o' Judgment! Heave him into the sea, my hearties! We don't want to give him no excuse to soften the truth for our sakes when he's called upon to spin his yarn!"

The men flocked round the bodies, and whilst three of them caught up the corpse of the skipper as if it had been a coil of rope, others of them began to handle Duckling.

"Him too?" asked one.

"What do you say, Mr. Royle?" demanded the carpenter.

"It ain't Mr. Royle's consarn!" cried one of the men.

The fellows who held the captain's body, not relishing their burden, went to leeward; and two of them taking the shoulders and one the feet, they began to swing him, and at a given word, shot him over the bulwarks. They then came back quite unconcernedly, one of them observing that the devil ought to be very much obliged to them for their handsome present.

The men roared with laughter.

"Now then, overboard with this thing!" the carpenter shouted.

They seized Duckling as they had seized Coxon, and slung him overboard, just as they had slung the other. Ill with these

scenes of horror, I called to the carpenter and asked him to step on the poop whilst I went into the cuddy.

"What to do there?" he inquired suspiciously.

"To get something to eat. I have had nothing all day but two of the ship's bad biscuits."

"Right," he said. "But, before I go, I'll tell you what's agreed among us. You're to take charge, and sarve with me and the bo'sun, turn and turn about on deck. That's agreeable, ain't it?"

"Quite."

"You're to do all the piloting of the ship, and navigate us to where the ship's company agrees upon."

"I understand."

"We three'll live aft here, and the ship's company forrards; but all the ship's stores'll be smothered, and the cuddy provisions sprung, d'ye see? Likewise the grog and whatsoever there may be proper to eat and drink. We're all to be ekals, and fare and fare alike, though the crew'll obey orders as usual. You're to have the skipper's berth, and I'll take yourn; and the bo'sun he'll take Duckling's. That we've all agreed on afore we went to work, and so I thought I'd let you know."

"Well, Mr. Stevens," I replied, "as I told you just now, I'll do your bidding. I'll take the ship to the place you may name; and as I shan't play you false (though I have no notion of your intentions), so I hope you won't play me false. I have begged for the steward's life, and you have promised to spare him. And how are the two persons we saved to be treated?"

"They're to live along with us here. All that's settled, I told yer. But I'm not so sure about the steward. I never made no promise about sparing of him."

"Look here!" I exclaimed sternly. "I am capable of taking this ship to any port you choose to name. There is not another man on board who could do this. I can keep you out of the track of ships, and help you in a number of ways to save your necks. Do you understand me? But I tell you—on my oath—if you murder the steward, if any further act of violence is committed on board this ship, I'll throw up my charge, and you may do your worst. These are my terms, easier to you than to me. What is your answer?"

He reflected a moment and replied, "I'll talk to my mates about it."

"Do so," I said. "Call them aft now. But you had better get on deck, as the ship wants watching. Talk to them on the poop."

He obeyed me literally, calling for the hands to lay aft, and I was left alone.

I went into the steward's pantry, where I found some cold meat and biscuit and a bottle of sherry. These things I carried to the aftermost end of the table. Somehow I did not feel greatly concerned about the debate going on overhead, as I knew the men could not do without me; nor did I believe the general feeling against the steward sufficiently strong to make them willing to sacrifice my services to their revengeful passions.

I fell to the meat and wine as greedily as a starving man, and was eating very heartily, when I felt a light touch on my arm. I turned hastily and confronted the girl whom I had brought away from the wreck. Her hair hung loose over her shoulders, and she was as pale as marble. But her blue eyes were very brilliant, and fired with a resolved and brave expression, and I thought her beautiful as she stood before me in the lamplight with her hair shining about her face.

"Are you Mr. Royle?" she asked, in a low but most clear and sweet voice.

"I am," I replied, rising.

She took my hand and kissed it.

"You have saved my father's life and mine, and I have prayed God to bless you for your noble courage. I have had no opportunity to thank you before. They would not let me see you. The captain said you had mutinied and were in irons. My father wishes to thank you—his heart is so full that he cannot rest—but he is too weak to move. Will you come and see him?"

She made a movement towards the cabin next the pantry.

"Not now," I said. "You should be asleep, resting after your terrible trials."

"How could I sleep?" she exclaimed with a shudder. "I have heard all that has been said. I heard them killing the man in that cabin there."

She clasped her hands convulsively.

"Frightful things have happened," I said, speaking quickly, for I every moment expected the men to come running down the companion ladder, near which we were conversing; "but the worst has passed. Did not you hear them answer me that you and your father were safe? Go to your cabin and sleep if you can, and be sure that no harm shall befall you whilst I remain in this ship. I have a very difficult part before me, and wish to reflect upon my position. And the sense that *your* security will depend upon my actions," I added, moved by her beauty and the memory of the fate I had rescued her from, "will make me doubly vigilant."

And as she had kissed my hand on meeting me, so now I raised hers to my lips; and obedient to my instructions, she entered her cabin and closed the door.

I stood for some time engrossed, to the exclusion of all other thoughts, by the picture impressed on my mind by the girl's sweet face. It inspired a new kind of energy in me. Whatever qualms my conscience may have suffered from my undertaking to navigate the ship for the satisfaction and safety of a pack of ruffians, merely because I stood in fear of my life, were annihilated by the sight of this girl. The profound necessity enjoined upon me to protect her from the dangers that would inevitably come upon her, should my life be taken, so violently affected me as I stood thinking of her, that my cowardly acquiescence in the basest proposals which the crew could submit, would have been tolerable to my conscience for her lonely and helpless sake.

The voices of the men overhead, talking in excited tones, awoke me to a sense of my situation. I took another draught of wine, and entered the captain's cabin, and seeing the log-book open on the table, carried it under the lamp in the cuddy. There I read off the sights of the previous day, replaced the book, and mounted to the poop.

The dawn was breaking in the east, and the sky heavy, though something of its threatening character had left it. There was a smart sea on, but the ship lay pretty steady, owing to the wind having freshened enough to keep the vessel well over. We were making no headway to speak of, the yards being against the masts, and but little canvas set. The fellow steering

l lounged at the wheel, one arm through the spokes, and his left leg across his right shin, letting all hands know by this free and easy attitude that we were all equals now, and that he was only there to oblige. He was watching the men assembled round the forward saloon skylight, and now and then called out to them.

There were eight or nine of the crew there and on the top of the skylight, and in the centre of the throng were squatted the boatswain and the carpenter.

Not thinking it polite to join the men until they summoned me, I walked to the compass to see how the ship's head lay; whereupon the man steering, out of a habit of respect too strong for him to control, drew himself erect, and looked at the sails, and then at the card, as a man intent upon his work. I made no observation to him, and swept the horizon through my hands, which I hollowed to collect the pale light, but could discover nothing save the rugged outline of waves.

Just then the men saw me, and both the carpenter and the boatswain scrambled off the skylight, and they all came towards me.

A tremor ran through me which I could not control, but strength was given me to suppress all outward manifestation of emotion, and I awaited their approach with a forced tranquillity which, as I afterwards heard, gave the more intelligent and better disposed among them a good opinion of me.

"Now then," said I, "Mr. Stevens, you told me that all your plans were prepared. Am I to have your confidence?"

"Sartinly," replied the fellow, looking around upon the assembled faces fast growing distinguishable in the gathering light. "You're a scholar and can sail the ship for us, and we look to you to get us out o' this mess, for we've treated you well and made you skipper."

"Go ahead," I exclaimed, seating myself in a nonchalant way on one of the gratings abaft the wheel.

"This here mutiny," began the carpenter, after casting about in his mind for words, "is all along o' bad treatment. Had the capten acted fair and proper, *we'd* ha' acted fair an' proper. He as good as swore that he'd put in for fresh stores, but never altered the ship's course, and we wouldn't starve no longer. So

we up and did the business. But we never meant to kill him. We was afraid he'd ha' had pistols on him, and so some of us knocked him down unawears, and knocked too hard, that was all. And t'other one he struggled so, instead of givin' up when he saw we was too many for ten o' the likes of him, that he died of his own doin'; and that's a fact, mates, ain't it?"

"Ay," responded a gruff voice. "He'd ha' gouged my eye out. He had his thumb in my mouth workin' away as if he thought my tooth was my eye. He drawed blood with his thumb, and I had to choke it out of my mouth, or he'd ha' tore my tongue out!"

So saying, he expectorated violently.

"To come back to wot I was saying," resumed the carpenter; "it's this. When me and my mates made up our minds to squench the skipper and his bully mate for their wrongful dealings with us, one says that our plan was to run the ship to the North Ameriky shore somewheercs. One says, Floridy way; and another, he says round into the Gulf o' Mexico, within reach o' New Orleans; and another, he says, 'Let's get south, mates, upon the coast of Africa;' and another, he says he's for making the ice, right away north, up near Baffin Land. But none was agreeable to that. We aren't resolved yet, but we're most all for Ameriky, because it's a big place, pretty nigh big enough to hide in."

Some of the men laughed.

"And so," continued the carpenter, "our plan is this: as easy as sayin' your prayers. We'll draw lots and choose upon the coast for you to run us to; and when we're a day's sail of them parts, leavin' you to tell us and to keep us out o' the way of ships, d'ye mind, Mr. Royle?"—with stern significance: I nodded—"some of us gets into the long-boat and some into the quarter-boats, and we pulls for the shore. And wot we do and says when we gets ashore needn't matter, eh, mates? We're shipwrecked mariners, desitoot and forlorn, and every man's for hisself. And so that's our plan."

"Make up your minds," I exclaimed, "and I'll alter the ship's course."

So saying, I got off the grating and walked to the other end of the poop.

I was much easier in my mind now that I had observed the disposition of the men. They were unquestionably alarmed by what they had done, which was tolerable security against the commission of further outrages. Their project of quitting the ship when near land and making for the shore, where, doubtless, they would represent themselves as shipwrecked seamen, was practicable and struck me as ingenious; for as soon as they got ashore they would disperse, and ship on board fresh vessels, and so defy inquiry even should suspicion be excited, or one of them peach upon his fellows. These I at least assumed to be their plans. But how far they would affect my own safety I could not tell. I doubted if they would let me leave the ship, as they might be sure that on my landing I should hasten to inform against them. But I would not allow my mind to be troubled with considerations of the future at that time. All my energies were required to deal with the crisis of the moment, and to guard myself against being led by too much confidence in their promises, into any step which might prove fatal to me and those I had promised to protect.

The dawn was now bright in the east and the wind strong from the southward. The ship was chopping on the tumbling seas with scarcely any way upon her; but the menacing aspect of the sky was fast fading, and there was a promise of fair weather in the clouds, which ranged high and out of the reach of the breeze that was burying the ship's lee channels.

Presently the carpenter called to me, and I went over to the men.

"We're all resolved, Mr. Royle," said he in a pretty civil voice, "and our votes is for New Orleans. Plenty of wessels is wrecked in the Gulf of Mexico, as I've heerd tell; and when we're about fifty miles off, you'll say so, and give us the bearings of the Mississippi, and we'll not trouble you any more."

"How's her head?" I asked the man at the wheel.

"Sou'-west," he replied.

"Keep her away," I exclaimed, for the weather leeches were flat.

"What's our true course for New Orleans?" asked the carpenter suspiciously.

"Stop a bit and I'll show you," I answered, and went below to the captain's cabin to get the chart.

I struck a wax match, and after a short search found the chart of the North Atlantic upon which the ship's course, so far as she had gone up to noon on the preceding day, was pricked off. I took this on deck, spread it on the skylight and showed our whereabouts to the men.

"Our course," said I, "is south-west and by west."

They bent their faces over the chart, studying it curiously.

"Are you satisfied, Mr. Stevens?" I asked him.

"Oh, I suppose it's all right," answered he.

"Slacken away the lee-braces," I said. "Put your helm up" (to the man at the wheel).

The men went tumbling off the poop to man the braces, and in a few minutes we were making a fair wind.

Both the carpenter and the boatswain remained on the poop.

"Some hands lay aloft and loose the fore and main top-gallant sails!" I called out. And turning to the carpenter: "Mr. Stevens," I said, "I'll navigate this ship for you and your mates to within fifty miles off the mouths of the Mississippi, as you wish; but on the conditions I have already named. Do you remember?"

"Oh yes," he growled. "We've done enough—too much, I dessay, though not more than the beggars desarved. All that we want is to get out o' this cursed wessel."

"Very well," I said. "But I won't undertake to pilot this ship safely unless my orders are obeyed."

"Right you are!" replied the carpenter.

"Sheet home!" I cried, as the sails fell from the top-gallant yards, anxious to clinch this matter.

And so it rested.



## *Cape Horn Companions*

RICHARD HENRY DANA

THE author joined the crew of the brig *Pilgrim* after his college studies had seriously affected his eyesight. The brig was to sail south from the American port of Boston, westward round Cape Horn, and north to the Californian coast. Such a change of life and occupation, it was hoped, would do for Dana's weak eyes what could not apparently be achieved by medical aid and attention. However, conditions afloat in the middle of the nineteenth century provided the new sailor with material which he wrote into a book destined to become a classic of its kind. The author's other memorable experiences aboard the *Pilgrim* are told in *Two Years Before the Mast*, from which this narrative is taken.

*Wednesday, November 5th.* The weather was fine during the previous night, and we had a clear view of the Magellan Clouds

and of the Southern Cross. The Magellan Clouds consist of three small nebulae in the southern part of the heavens—two bright, like the Milky Way, and one dark. They are first seen just above the horizon, soon after crossing the southern tropic. The Southern Cross begins to be seen at  $18^{\circ}$  N., and, when off Cape Horn, is nearly overhead. It is composed of four stars in that form, and is one of the brightest constellations in the heavens.

During the first part of this day (Wednesday) the wind was light, but after noon it came on fresh, and we furled the royals. We still kept the studding-sails out, and the captain said he should go round with them if he could. Just before eight o'clock (then about sundown, in that latitude) the cry of "All hands ahoy!" was sounded down the fore-scuttle and the after-hatchway, and, hurrying upon deck, we found a large black cloud rolling on toward us from the south-west, blackening the whole heavens. "Here comes Cape Horn!" said the chief mate; and we had hardly time to haul down and clew up before it was upon us. In a few minutes a heavier sea was raised than I had ever seen, and as it was directly ahead, the little brig, which was no better than a bathing-machine, plunged into it, and all the forward part of her was under water; the sea pouring in through the bow-ports and hawse-holes and over the knight-heads, threatening to wash everything overboard. In the lee scuppers it was up to a man's waist. We sprang aloft and double-reefed the topsails, and furled the other sails, and made all snug. But this would not do; the brig was labouring and straining against the head sea, and the gale was growing worse and worse. At the same time sleet and hail were driving with all fury against us. We clewed down, and hauled out the reef-tackles again, and close-reefed the fore-topsail, and furled the main, and hove her to, on the starboard tack. Here was an end to our fine prospects. We made up our minds to head-winds and cold weather; sent down the royal-yards, and unrove the gear; but all the rest of the top hamper remained aloft, even to the skysail masts and studding-sail booms.

Throughout the night it stormed violently—rain, hail, snow, and sleet beating upon the vessel—the wind continuing ahead, and the sea running high. At daybreak (about three a.m.) the deck was covered with snow. The captain sent up the steward

with a glass of grog to each of the watch; and all the time that we were off the Cape, grog was given to the morning watch, and to all hands whenever we reefed topsails. The clouds cleared away at sunrise, and, the wind becoming more fair, we again made sail and stood nearly up to our course.

*Thursday, November 6th.* It continued more pleasant through the first part of the day, but at night we had the same scene over again. This time we did not heave to, as on the night before, but endeavoured to beat to windward under close-reefed topsails, balance-reefed trysail, and fore-topmast stay-sail. This night it was my turn to steer, or, as the sailors say, my *trick* at the helm, for two hours. Inexperienced as I was, I made out to steer to the satisfaction of the officer, and neither S—— nor I gave up our tricks, all the time that we were off the Cape. This was something to boast of, for it requires a good deal of skill and watchfulness to steer a vessel close-hauled, in a gale of wind, against a heavy head-sea. "Ease her when she pitches," is the word; and a little carelessness in letting her ship a heavy sea might sweep the decks, or take a mast out of her.

*Friday, November 7th.* Towards morning the wind went down, and during the whole forenoon we lay tossing about in a dead calm, and in the midst of a thick fog. The calms here are unlike those in most parts of the world, for here there is generally so high a sea running, with periods of calm so short that it has no time to go down; and vessels, being under no command of sails or rudder, lie like logs upon the water. We were obliged to steady the booms and yards by guys and braces, and to lash everything well below. We now found our top hamper of some use, for though it is liable to be carried away or sprung by the sudden "bringing up" of a vessel when pitching in a chopping sea, yet it is a great help in steadying a vessel when rolling in a long swell—giving more slowness, ease, and regularity to the motion.

The calm of the morning reminds me of a scene which I remember from its being the first time that I had heard the near breathing of whales. It was on the night that we passed between the Falkland Islands and Staten Land. We had the watch from twelve to four, and, coming upon deck, found the little brig lying still, and surrounded by a thick fog, and the sea as smooth

as though oil had been poured upon it; yet now and then a long, low swell rolling under its surface, slightly lifting the vessel, but without breaking the glassy smoothness of the water. We were surrounded far and near by shoals of sluggish whales and grampuses, which the fog prevented our seeing, rising slowly to the surface, or perhaps lying out at length, heaving out those peculiar, deep, long-drawn breathings which give such an impression of supineness and strength. Some of the watch were asleep, and the others were perfectly still; there was nothing to break the illusion, and I stood leaning over the bulwarks, listening to the slow breathings of the mighty creatures—now one breaking the water just alongside, whose black body I almost fancied that I could see through the fog; and again another, which I could just hear in the distance—until the low and regular swell seemed like the heaving of the ocean's mighty bosom to the sound of its own heavy and long-drawn respirations.

Towards the evening of this day (Friday, 7th) the fog cleared off, and we had every appearance of a cold blow; and soon after sundown it came on. Again it was clew up and haul down, reef and furl, until we had got her down to close-reefed topsails, double-reefed trysail, and reefed fore-spender. Snow, hail and sleet were driving upon us most of the night, and the sea was breaking over the bows and covering the forward part of the little vessel; but, as she would lay her course, the captain refused to heave her to.

*Saturday, November 8th.* This day began with calm and thick fog, and ended with hail, snow, a violent wind, and close-reefed topsails.

*Sunday, November 9th.* Today the sun rose clear, and continued so until twelve o'clock, when the captain got an observation. This was very well for Cape Horn, and we thought it a little remarkable that, as we had not had one unpleasant Sunday during the whole voyage, the only tolerable day here should be a Sunday. We got time to clear up the steerage and forecabin, and set things to rights, and to overhaul our wet clothes a little. But this did not last very long. Between five and six—the sun was then nearly three hours high—the cry of “All Starboardlines ahoy!” summoned our watch on deck, and immediately all

hands were called. A true specimen of Cape Horn was coming upon us. A great cloud of a dark slate colour was driving on us from the south-west; and we did our best to take in sail (for the light sails had been set during the first part of the day) before we were in the midst of it. We had got the light sails furled, the courses hauled up, and the topsail reef-tackles hauled out, and were just mounting the fore-rigging when the storm struck us. In an instant the sea, which had been comparatively quiet, was running higher and higher; and it became almost as dark as night. The hail and sleet were harder than I had yet felt them, seeming almost to pin us down to the rigging. We were longer taking in sail than ever before; for the sails were stiff and wet, the ropes and rigging covered with snow and sleet, and we ourselves cold and nearly blinded with the violence of the storm. By the time we had got down upon deck again, the little brig was plunging madly into a tremendous head-sea, which at every drive rushed in through the bow-ports and over the bows, and buried all the forward part of the vessel. At this instant the chief mate, who was standing on the top of the windlass, at the foot of the spenser-mast, called out, "Lay out there and furl the jib!" This was no agreeable or safe duty, yet it must be done. An old Swede (the best sailor on board), who belonged on the fore-castle, sprang out upon the bowsprit. Another one must go. There was no time for thinking. I was near the mate, but sprang past several, threw the downhaul over the windlass, and jumped between the knight-heads out upon the bowsprit. The crew stood abaft the windlass and hauled the jib down, while John and I got upon the weather-side of the jib-boom, our feet on the foot-ropes, holding on by the spar, the great jib flying off to leeward and *slatting* so as almost to throw us off the boom. For some time we could do nothing but hold on, and the vessel, diving into two huge seas, one after the other, plunged us twice into the water up to our chins. We hardly knew whether we were on or off; when, the boom lifting us up dripping from the water, we were raised high into the air. John, that was the sailor's name, thought the boom would go every moment, and called out to the mate to keep the vessel off, and haul down the staysail; but the fury of the wind and the breaking of the seas against the bows defied every attempt to make ourselves heard,

and we were obliged to do the best we could in our situation. Fortunately no other sea so heavy struck her, and we succeeded in furling the jib "after a fashion"; and, coming in over the staysail nettings, were not a little pleased to find that all was snug, and the watch gone below; for we were soaked through, and it was very cold. John admitted that it had been a post of danger, which good sailors seldom do when the thing is over. The weather continued nearly the same through the night.

*Monday, November 10th.* During a part of this day we were hove to, but the rest of the time were driving on, under close-reefed sails, with a heavy sea, a strong gale, and frequent squalls of hail and snow.

*Tuesday, November 11th.* The same.

*Wednesday.* The same.

*Thursday.* The same.

We had now got hardened to Cape weather, and the vessel was under reduced sail, and everything secured on deck and below, so that we had little to do but to steer and to stand our watch. Our clothes were all wet through, and the only change was from wet to more wet. There was no fire in the forecabin, and we could not dry clothes at the galley. It was in vain to think of reading or working below, for we were too tired, the hatchways were closed down, and everything was wet and uncomfortable, black and dirty, heaving and pitching. We had only to come below when the watch was out, wring our wet clothes, hang them up out of the way anywhere, and turn in and sleep as soundly as we could, until our watch was called again. A sailor can sleep anywhere—no sound of wind, water, canvas, rope, wood, or iron, can keep him awake—and we were always fast asleep when three blows on the hatchway, and the unwelcome cry of "All Starboardlines ahoy! eight bells there below! do you hear the news?" (the usual formula of calling the watch) roused us up from our berths upon the cold, wet decks. The only time when we could be said to take any pleasure was at night and morning, when we were allowed a tin pot full of hot tea (or, as the sailors significantly call it, "water bewitched") sweetened with molasses. This, bad as it was, was still warm and comforting, and, together with our sea-biscuit and cold salt beef, made a meal. Yet even this meal was

attended with some uncertainty. We had to go ourselves to the galley and take our kid of beef and tin pots of tea, and run the risk of losing them before we could get below. Many a kid of beef have I seen rolling in the scuppers, and the bearer lying at his length on the decks. I remember an English lad who was the life of the crew—whom we afterwards lost overboard—standing for nearly ten minutes at the galley, with his pot of tea in his hand, waiting for a chance to get down into the forecabin; and, seeing what he thought was a “smooth spell,” started to go forward. He had just got to the end of the windlass, when a great sea broke over the bows, and for a moment I saw nothing of him but his head and shoulders; and at the next instant, being taken off his legs, he was carried aft with the sea, until her stern lifting up, and sending the water forward, he was left high and dry at the side of the longboat, still holding on to his tin pot, which had now nothing in it but salt water. But nothing could ever daunt him, or overcome, for a moment, his habitual good-humour. Regaining his legs, and shaking his fist at the man at the wheel, he rolled below, saying, as he passed, “A man’s no sailor, if he can’t take a joke.” The ducking was not the worst of such an affair, for, as there was an allowance of tea, you could get no more from the galley; and although the others would never suffer a man to go without, but would always turn in a little from their own pots to fill up his, yet this was at best but dividing the loss among all hands.

Something of the same kind befell me a few days after. The cook had just made for us a mess of hot “scourf”—that is, biscuit pounded fine, salt beef cut into small pieces, and a few potatoes, boiled up together and seasoned with pepper. This was a rare treat, and I being the last at the galley, had it put in my charge to carry down for the mess. I got along very well as far as the hatchway, and was just going down the steps, when a heavy sea, lifting the stern out of water, and, passing forward, dropping it again, threw the steps from their place, and I came down into the steerage a little faster than I meant to, with the kid on top of me, and the whole precious mess scattered over the floor. Whatever your feelings may be, you must make a joke of everything at sea; and if you were to fall from aloft and be caught in the belly of a sail, and thus saved from instant death,

it would not do to look at all disturbed, or make a serious matter of it.

*Friday, November 14th.* We were now well to the westward of the Cape, and were changing our course to northward as much as we dared, since the strong south-west winds, which prevailed then, carried us in towards Patagonia. At two p.m. we saw a sail on our larboard beam, and at four we made it out to be a large ship, steering our course, under single-reefed topsails. We at that time had shaken the reefs out of our topsails, as the wind was lighter, and set the main-topgallant sail. As soon as our captain saw what sail she was under, he set the fore-topgallant sail and flying jib; and the old whaler—for such his boats and short sail showed him to be—felt a little ashamed, and shook the reefs out of his topsails, but could do no more, for he had sent down his topgallant masts off the Cape. He ran down for us, and answered our hail as the whale-ship *New England*, of Poughkeepsie, one hundred and twenty days from New York. Our captain gave our name, and added, ninety-two days from Boston. They then had a little conversation about longitude, in which they found that they could not agree. The ship fell astern, and continued in sight during the night. Towards morning, the wind having become light, we crossed our royal and skysail yards, and at daylight we were seen under a cloud of sail, having royals and skysails fore and aft. The “spouter”, as the sailors call a whaleman, had sent up his main-topgallant mast and set the sail, and made signal for us to heave to. About half-past seven their whale-boat came alongside, and Captain Job Terry sprang on board, a man known in every port and by every vessel in the Pacific Ocean. “Don’t you know Job Terry? I thought everybody knew Job Terry,” said a green hand, who came in the boat, to me, when I asked him about his captain.

He was indeed a singular man. He was six feet high, wore thick cowhide boots, and brown coat and trousers, and, except a sunburnt complexion, had not the slightest appearance of a sailor; yet he had been forty years in the whale-trade, and, as he said himself, had owned ships, built ships, and sailed ships. His boat’s crew were a pretty raw set, just out of the bush, and, as the sailor’s phrase is, “hadn’t got the hay-seed out of their hair.” Captain Terry convinced our captain that our reckoning

was a little out, and, having spent the day on board, put off in his boat at sunset for his ship, which was now six or eight miles astern. He began a "yearn" when he came aboard, which lasted, with but little intermission, for four hours. It was all about himself, and the Peruvian Government, and the *Dublin* frigate and her captain, Lord James Townshend, and President Jackson, and the ship *Ann M'Kim*, of Baltimore. It would probably never have come to an end, had not a good breeze sprung up, which sent him off to his own vessel. One of the lads who came in his boat, a thoroughly countrified-looking fellow, seemed to care very little about the vessel, rigging, or anything else, but went round looking at the live-stock, and leaned over the pigsty, and said he wished he was back again tending his father's pigs.

This promising young "spouter" did all but drown one of the best harpooners of the whaler through his carelessness one day. He was alongside the skeleton of a whale while it was being cut adrift, and thoughtlessly stuck the point of his boat-hook through the ring of the harpooner's spur; and in the same act seized the jawbone of the fish with the same implement. Before this was discovered the skeleton was set at liberty, and began instantly to sink. The harpooner then threw himself towards the boat; but being firmly entangled by the foot, he fell into the water. Providentially he caught the gunwhale of the boy's boat with his hands; but overpowered by the weight of the sinking skeleton, he was on the point of relinquishing his grasp, when some of his companions got hold of his hands, while others threw a rope round his body. The carcass of the fish was now suspended entirely by the poor fellow's body, which was consequently so dreadfully extended that there was some danger of his being drawn asunder. But such was his terror of being taken under water—and not indeed without cause, for he could never have risen again—that notwithstanding the excruciating pain he suffered, he constantly cried out to haul away the rope. He remained thus until means were taken for hooking and drawing the skeleton back to the surface, when he was released.

At eight o'clock we altered our course to the northward, bound for Juan Fernandez.

This day we saw the last of the albatrosses, which had been our companions a great part of the time off the Cape. I had been interested in the bird from descriptions which I had read of it, and was not at all disappointed. We caught one or two with a baited hook which we floated astern upon a shingle. Their long, flapping wings, long legs, and large, staring eyes, give them a very peculiar appearance. They look well on the wing; but one of the finest sights that I have ever seen was an albatross asleep upon the water, during a calm, off Cape Horn, when a heavy sea was running. There being no breeze, the surface of the water was unbroken, but a long, heavy swell was rolling, and we saw the fellow, all white, directly ahead of us, asleep upon the waves, with his head under his wing; now rising on the top of one of the big billows, and then falling slowly until he was lost in the hollow between. He was undisturbed for some time, until the noise of our bows, gradually approaching, roused him, when, lifting his head, he stared upon us for a moment, and then spread his wide wings and took his flight.

*Monday, November 19th.* This was a black day in our calendar. At seven o'clock in the morning, it being our watch below, we were aroused from a sound sleep by the cry of "All hands ahoy! a man overboard!" This unwonted cry sent a thrill through the heart of everyone, and, hurrying on deck, we found the vessel hove flat aback, with all her studding-sails set; for, the boy who was at the helm leaving it to throw something overboard, the carpenter, who was an old sailor, knowing that the wind was light, put the helm down and hove her aback. The watch on deck were lowering away the quarter-boat, and I got on deck just in time to fling myself into her as she was leaving the side; but it was not until out upon the wide Pacific, in our little boat, that I knew whom we had lost. It was George Ballmer, the young English sailor, whom I have mentioned as the merriest of the crew. He was prized by the officers as an active and willing seaman, and by the crew as a lively, hearty fellow, and a good shipmate. He was going aloft to fit a strap round the main-topmast-head, for ringtail halyards, and had the strap and block, a coil of halyards, and a marline-spike about his neck. He fell from the starboard futtock-shrouds, and, not knowing how to swim, and being heavily dressed, with all those things round

his neck, he probably sank immediately. We pulled astern, in the direction in which he fell, and though we knew that there was no hope of saving him, yet no one wished to speak of returning, and we rowed about for nearly an hour, without an idea of doing anything, but unwilling to acknowledge to ourselves that we must give him up. At length we turned the boat's head and made towards the brig.

Death is at all times solemn, but never so much so as at sea. A man dies on shore; his body remains with his friends, and "the mourners go about the streets"; but when a man falls overboard at sea and is lost, there is a suddenness in the event, and a difficulty in realizing it, which give to it an air of awful mystery. A man dies on shore—you follow his body to the grave, and a stone marks the spot. You are often prepared for the event. There is always something which helps you to realize it when it happens, and to recall it when it has passed. A man is shot down by your side in battle, and the mangled body remains an object, and a real evidence; but at sea the man is near you—at your side—you hear his voice, and in an instant he is gone, and nothing but a vacancy shows his loss. Then, too, at sea—to use a homely but expressive phrase—you *miss* a man so much. A dozen men are shut up together in a little bark upon the wide, wide sea, and for months and months see no forms and hear no voices but their own, and one is taken suddenly from among them, and they miss him at every turn. It is like losing a limb. There are no new faces or new scenes to fill up the gap. There is always an empty berth in the forecastle, and one man wanting when the small night-watch is mustered. There is one less to take the wheel, and one less to lay out with you upon the yard. You miss his form, and the sound of his voice, for habit had made them almost necessary to you, and each of your senses feels the loss.

All these things make such a death peculiarly solemn, and the effect of it remains upon the crew for some time. There is more kindness shown by the officers to the crew, and by the crew to one another. There is more quietness and seriousness. The oath and the loud laugh are gone. The officers are more watchful, and the crew go more carefully aloft. The lost man is seldom mentioned, or is dismissed with a sailor's rude eulogy,

“Well, poor George is gone! His cruise is up soon! He knew his work, and did his duty; and was a good shipmate.”

A sailor's life is at best but a mixture of a little good with much evil, and a little pleasure with much pain. The beautiful is linked with the revolting, the sublime with the commonplace, and the solemn with the ludicrous.

Not long after we had returned on board with our sad report, an auction was held of the poor man's clothes. The captain had first, however, called all hands aft, and asked them if they were satisfied that everything had been done to save the man, and if they thought there was any use in remaining there longer. The crew all said that it was in vain, for the man did not know how to swim, and was very heavily dressed. So we then filled away and kept the brig off to her course.

The laws regulating navigation make the captain answerable for the effects of a sailor who dies during the voyage, and it is a universal custom, established for convenience, that the captain should immediately dispose of his things, in which they are bid off by the sailors, and the sums which they give are deducted from their wages at the end of the voyage. In this way the trouble and risk of keeping his things through the voyage are avoided, and the clothes are usually sold for more than they would be worth on shore. Accordingly, we had no sooner got the ship before the wind, than his chest was brought up upon the forecabin, and the sale began. The jackets and trousers in which we had seen him dressed so lately were exposed and bid off while the life was hardly out of his body, and his chest was taken aft and used as a store-chest, so that there was nothing left which could be called *his*. Sailors have an unwillingness to wear a dead man's clothes during the same voyage, and they seldom do so, unless they are in absolute want.

As is usual after a death, many stories were told about George. Some had heard him say that he repented never having learned to swim, and that he knew that he should meet his death by drowning. Another said that he never knew any good to come of a voyage made against the will, and the deceased man shipped and spent his advance, and was afterwards very unwilling to go, but, not being able to refund, was obliged to sail with us. A boy, too, who had become quite attached to

him, said that George talked to him, during most of the watch on the night before, about his mother and family at home, and this was the first time he had mentioned the subject during the voyage.

The night after this event, when I went to the galley to get a light, I found the cook inclined to be talkative, so I sat down on the spars, and gave him an opportunity to hold a yarn. I was the more inclined to do so, as I found that he was full of the superstitions once more common among seamen, and which the recent death had waked up in his mind. He talked about George's having spoken of his friends, and said he believed few men died without having a warning of it, which he supported by a great many stories of dreams, and of unusual behaviour of men before death. From this he went on to other superstitions, the *Flying Dutchman*, etc., and talked rather mysteriously, having something evidently on his mind. At length he put his head out of the galley and looked carefully about to see if anyone was within hearing, and, being satisfied on that point, asked me in a low tone—

"I say! you know what countryman 'e carpenter be?"

"Yes," said I: "he's a German."

"What kind of a German?" said the cook.

"He belongs to Bremen," said I.

"Are you sure o' dat?" said he.

I satisfied him on that point by saying that he could speak no language but the German and English.

"I'm plaguy glad o' dat," said the cook. 'I was mighty 'fraid he was a Finn. I tell you what, I been plaguy civil to that man all the voyage."

I asked him the reason of this, and found that he was fully possessed with the notion that Finns are wizards, and especially have power over winds and storms. I tried to reason with him about it, but he had the best of all arguments, that from experience, at hand, and was not to be moved. He had been to the Sandwich Islands in a vessel in which the sail-maker was a Finn, and could do anything he was of a mind to. This sail-maker kept a junk bottle in his berth, which was always just half full of rum, though he got drunk upon it nearly every day. He had seen him sit for hours together, talking to this bottle, which

he stood up before him on the table. The same man cut his throat in his berth, and everybody said he was possessed.

He had heard of ships, too, beating up the Gulf of Finland against a head-wind, and having a ship heave in sight astern, overhaul, and pass them, with as fair a wind as could blow, and all studding-sails out, and find she was from Finland.

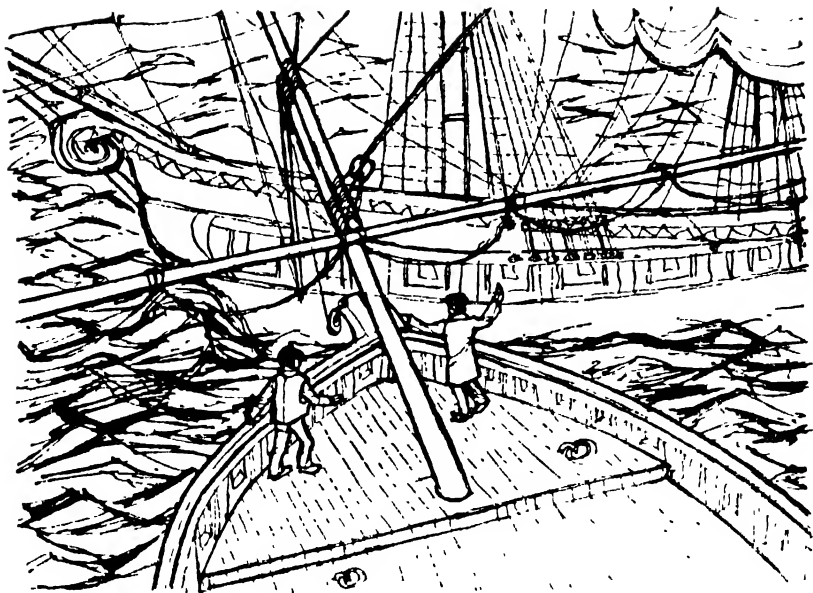
"Oh no!" said he; "I've seen too much of them men to want to see 'em 'board a ship."

As I still doubted, he said he would leave it to John, who was the oldest seaman aboard, and would know, if anybody did. John, to be sure, was the oldest, and at the same time the most ignorant man in the ship; but I consented to have him called. The cook stated the matter to him, and John, as I anticipated, sided with the cook, and said that he himself had been in a ship where they had a head-wind for a fortnight, and the captain found out at last that one of the men, with whom he had had some hard words a short time before, was a Finn, and immediately told him if he didn't stop the head-wind he would shut him down in the forepeak. The Finn would not give in, and the captain shut him down in the forepeak, and would not give him anything to eat. The Finn held out for a day and a half, when he could not stand it any longer, and did something or other which brought the wind round again, and they let him up.

"Dar," said the cook, "what do you think o' dat?"

I told him I had no doubt it was true, and that it would have been odd if the wind had not changed in fifteen days, Finn or no Finn.

"Oh," says he, "go 'way! You think 'cause you been to college, you know better than anybody. You know better than dem as 'as seen it wid der own eyes. You wait till you've been to sea as long as I have, and den you'll know."



## *Tragedy in the Channel*

EDWARD HOWARD

IN the days of sail a midshipman in the Royal Navy was popularly known as a reefer. Ralph Rattlin was one aboard the frigate H.M.S. *Eos*, commanded by Captain Reut, a man whose habits and disposition changed greatly during a voyage that lasted more than three years. Ralph fell into dire disgrace one night when the wind in the English Channel was keen and cold. The *Eos* was convoying deep-laden merchantmen from the Indies at the time. Afterwards Ralph had a taste of what was cynically called reefers' law. His many exploits, both grave and gay, are related by a great friend of Captain Marryat in *Rattlin the Reefer*, from which this story is taken. When the book first appeared it was described as edited by Captain Marryat, which is why today many people mistakenly believe it was written by Captain Marryat instead of his close friend Edward Howard.

Through the rude and the cold flying mists of winter, after we had struck soundings, we again saw England. It was in the inclement month of January. I was starved and half clad. A beggar of any decent pretension, had he met me in the streets of London, would have taken the wall of me, though I had at the time more than three hundred dollars in cash, Spanish doubloons and silver, a power for drawing bills for a hundred a year, more than three years' pay due, and prize money to a very considerable amount.

Under these circumstances my eyes once more greeted my native land. Where were my glow of patriotism and my passion of poetry? They were not. I saw nothing before me but a black, a barren, and a forbidding coast. I endeavoured to fix my mind upon the fields over which I had bounded in my boyhood—I measured them in my mind's eye, hedge by hedge—they were distinct enough, but there was no sunshine upon them. Alas! I had seen a brighter sun elsewhere. And the friends that had been kind to one—yes, I would see them. But I had no longer the frank heart to offer. Yes, I would seek them, and be cold and studiously polite. I felt that I had not succeeded in my profession with what *they* would call success. I had done my duty, and perhaps done it with high promise. Good, easy souls! I am sure they fancied that I should have returned something—perhaps a little—short of an admiral, but not very much.

I should like to know how a midshipman is to distinguish himself otherwise than by doing his duty honourably and strictly, and that is no distinction at all for they almost all do it. "I wish we may have some brilliant action," says one of the uninitiated, "for I wish to distinguish myself." "Very well, my young aspirant"—which used, by the by, to be the corresponding term for midshipman in the French language—"Very well, my young sir; here you are in your frigate, alongside a heavier vessel than your own. Nay, it shall be a seventy-four if you please, all for your particular honour and glory. There you are, stationed at the four after-guns on the main deck. Blaze away and distinguish yourself now." "O dear! I can't for the smoke and the smother and the noise. I can't perform any heroical act here." "Well, but what *can you* do for your country and his Majesty?" "I can only see that the men train their guns well,

and that they are properly supplied with powder and shot—this will never get my name in the *Gazette*.” “Only do that well, sir, and you will distinguish yourself. Never mind the *Gazette*; your turn will come when you are a skipper, even perhaps when a lieutenant.”

The same applies to the young gentlemen, station them where you will. Gouty old gentlemen who have sons at sea, and are prone to read the lives of Nelson and of our many other noble naval heroes, must rid themselves of the illusion of seeing the darlings of their hopes start away from their obscure yet important quarters, jump up in the faces of the enemy, flourish valorously their little dirks, lead the boarders over a handspike from ship to ship, put the French captain surrounded by his officers to the sword, haul down the tricolour with his own hands, and finally exclaim: “Hurrah for glory and old England!” I say elderly ladies, and gentlemen as elderly, must not expect this, notwithstanding their own folly and some very funny naval novels that have been published. People must not desert their stations in action, even to do little bits of glorious heroism. The whole fraternity of reefers ought to thank me for this digression.

Thus, in the naval-novel sense of the word, I had not distinguished myself. My name had certainly appeared some few times in the captain’s dispatches, to the effect that “Mr. Rattlin, in the cutter, had gallantly supported Lieutenant Selby in cutting out a schooner,” etc. Glory! what did the world at large care about the paltry schooner, or the unknown lieutenant, who really did a prodigy of valour?—or the infinitely more insignificant “Mr. Rattlin, who gallantly supported the said lieutenant in the cutter?” But of all this I do not complain. It is just as it should be—only—only I wish that our discriminating countrymen should comprehend what a vast amount of unrecorded heroism goes to make up even a single victory—heroism which is not, but ought to be, glory.

I got into disgrace. I record it frankly. Since the captain’s incipient insanity, the *Eos* had gradually become an ill-regulated ship. The gallant first lieutenant, formerly so smart and so active, had not escaped the general demoralization. He was a disappointed man. He had not distinguished himself. God

knows, it was neither for want of daring nor expense of life. He had cut out everything that could be carried, and had attempted almost everything that could not. I am compelled to say that these bloody onslaughts were as often failures as successes. He was no nearer his next step on the ladder of promotion than before. His temper became soured, and he was now often lax, sometimes unjust, and always irritable. The other officers shared in the general falling off, and too often made the quarter-deck a display for temper.

The third lieutenant—yes, I think it was the third—had mast-headed me about the middle of the first dog-watch; most likely deservedly, for I had lately affected to give the proud and sullen answer. Before I went aloft to my miserable station I represented to him that I had the first watch; that there were now but three of the young gentlemen doing their duty, the others having very wisely fallen ill and taken the protection of the sick-list. I told him, respectfully enough, “that if he kept me up in that disagreeable station from half-past five till eight, I could not possibly do my duty, for very weariness, from eight till midnight. It was a physical impossibility.” But he was inexorable. Up I went, the demon of all evil passions gnawing at my heart.

It was almost dark when I went aloft. It was a gusty, dreary night, bitterly, very bitterly cold. I was ill clad. At intervals the fierce and frozen drifts, like the stings of so many wasps, drove fiercely into my face; and I believe that I must confess that I cried over my crooked and aching fingers, as the circulation went on with agony or stopped with numbness. It is true I was called down within the hour; but that hour of suffering had done me much constitutional mischief. I was stupefied as much as if I had committed a debauch upon fat ale. However, I was too angry to complain or to seek relief from the surgeon. I went on deck at half-past eight with obtuse faculties and a reckless heart.

The frigate was, with a deeply laden convoy, attempting to hold her course in the chops of the Channel. It blew very hard. The waves were bounding about us with that short and angry leap peculiar in tempestuous weather to the narrow seas between England and France. It was excessively dark, and not

carrying sufficient sail to tack, we were wearing the ship every half-hour, showing of course the proper signal lights to the convoy. We carried also the customary poop-light of the commodore.

Such was the state of affairs at a little after nine. The captain, the first lieutenant, the master, the officer of the watch, and the Channel pilot that we had taken on board off the Scilly Islands, with myself, were all on deck. Both the signal midshipmen were enjoying the comfort of sickness in their warm hammocks below.

Now I will endeavour to give a faithful account of what happened, and let the unprejudiced determine, in the horrible calamity that ensued, how much blame was fairly attributable to me. I must premise that, owing to shortness of number, even when all were well there was no fore-castle midshipman.

A dreadful gust of icy wind, accompanied by the arrowy sleet, rushes aft, rather heading us.

"The wind is getting more round to the east. We'd better wear at once," said the pilot to the master.

"The pilot advises us to wear," said the master to the captain.

"Mr. Farmer," said the captain to the first lieutenant, "watch and idlers, wear ship."

"Mr. Pond," said Mr. Farmer to the lieutenant of the watch (a diminutive and peppery little man, with a squeaking voice, and remarkable for nothing else except having a large wife and a large family, whom he was impatient to see), "wear."

"Mr. Rattlin," squeaked Mr. Pond through his trumpet, "order the boatswain's mate to turn the watch and idlers up—wear ship."

"Boatswain's mate," bawled out the sleepy and sulky Mr. Rattlin, "watch and idlers, wear ship."

"Aye, aye, sir—whew, whew, whistle whew—watch and idlers, wear ship! Tumble up there, tumble up! Master-at-arms, brush up the bone-polishers."

"What an infernal nonsensical ceremony!" growled the pilot *sotto voce*; "all bawl and no haul—lucky we've plenty of sea room."

"Jump aft, Mr. Rattlin," said the captain, "and see that the convoy signal to wear is all right."

Mr. Rattlin makes one step aft.

"Is the fore-topmast staysail halyards well manned, Mr. Rattlin?—Jump forward and see," said the officer of the watch.

Mr. Rattlin makes one step forward.

"Is the deep-sea lead ready?" said the master. "Mr. Rattlin, jump into the chains and see."

Mr. Rattlin makes one step to the right—*starboard*, the wise it call.

"Mr. Rattlin, what the devil are you about?—where's the hand stationed to the foresheet?" said the first lieutenant. "Jump there and see."

Mr. Rattlin makes one step to the left hand—*port*, the wise it call.

"Where's the midshipman o' th' watch—where's the midshipman o' th' watch?" roars out the captain. "By heavens, there's no light to show over the bows! Mr. Rattlin, be smart, sir—jump forward and see to it."

The chilled, the torpid, and half-stupefied Mr. Rattlin finally went forward on the forecastle, where he ought to have been from the first, the more especially as the boatswain was also on the sick-list.

The consequence of all these multitudinous and almost simultaneous orders—to jump and see, when, by the by, it was too dark to see anything a yard off properly—was that one of the signal lanterns was blown out and the signal consequently imperfect—that the fore-topmast staysail halyards were so badly manned that those upon them could scarcely start that then necessary sail from its netting—that the people were not ready with the deep-sea lead—that little Mr. Pond was obliged to put down his trumpet and ease off the foresheet himself till relieved by the quartermaster; but still there actually *was* a lantern over the bows, and that in good time.

Well, the noble ship was no longer buffeted on her bows by the furious wind: as the haughty Essex turned on his heel from the blow of his termagant mistress-queen, so did the *Eos* turn her back to the insulting blast, and flew rapidly before it. Owing to the darkness of the night, assisted by the weak voice of Mr. Pond, whose orders could not be very distinctly heard, perhaps a little to his lubberly manner of working the ship, the

bounding frigate was much longer before the wind than necessary. I was straining my sight near the cathead on one side, and the captain of the forecastle on the other, but we could discover nothing in the nearly palpable obscure.

It is an awful thing, this rushing through the darkness of a large floating world. The planets urge for ever their sublime course, but not as does a ship when the veil of night is on the ocean. The glorious luminaries travel through regions of light directed by unerring wisdom, but the ark of man stumbles and reels through mists and folly, and rashness too often stands at the helm. And yet I seldom viewed our frigate careering at night through the waters, with nothing to be seen but these the gorgeous stars above her, but I was apt to fancy she was as one of the heavenly brotherhood, humble certainly in her imitation, and lowly in her sphere.

On she dashed, and our anxious eyes saw nothing, whilst our minds feared greatly—she is at her utmost speed. In her reckless course she seems sufficiently powerful to break up the steadfast rock or tear the shoal from its roots at the bottom of the ocean. On she rushes! I think I hear faintly the merchant cry of “Yeo—yo—yeo!” but the roar of the vexed waters beneath our bows and the eternal singing of the winds through the frost-stiffened shrouds prevent my being certain of the fact. But I tremble excessively—when, behold, a huge, long, black mass is lying lazily before us, and so close that we can almost touch it!

“Hard-a-port!” I roared out at the very top of my voice.

“Hard-a-starboard!” sang out the captain of the forecastle equally loudly.

Vain, vain were the contradictory orders. The frigate seemed to leap at the object before her as at a prey; and dire was the crash that ensued. As we may suppose the wrathful lioness springs upon the buffalo, and meeting more resistance from its horny bulk than she had suspected, recoils and makes another spring, so did the *Eos* strike again—I felt two distinct percussions.

The second stroke divided the obstacle; she passed through it or over it, and the eye looked in vain for the vast West Indian man, the bearer of wealth, and gay hopes, and youth, and

infancy, manly strength, and female beauty. There was a smothered feminine shriek, hushed by the whirling and down-absorbing waves almost as soon as made. It was not loud, but it was fearfully distinct and painfully human. One poor wretch only was saved to tell her name and speak of the perished.

As usual they had kept but a bad look-out. Her officers and her passengers were making merry in the cabin—the wine-cup was at their lips, and the song was floating joyously from the mouths of the fair ones returning to the land of their nativity. The blooming daughters, the newly married wife, and two matrons with their innocent ones beside them, were all in the happiness of their hopes when the Destroyer was upon them suddenly, truly like a strong man in the darkness of night; and they were all hurled, in the midst of their uncensurable revelry, to a deep grave over which no tombstone shall ever tell “of their whereabouts.”

Our own jib-boom was snapped off short, and as quickly as is a twig in frosty weather. Supposing the ship had struck, every soul rushed on deck. They thanked God it was *only* the drowning of some forty fellow-creatures and the destruction of a fine merchant ship. We hauled the single poor fellow that was saved on board. The consternation among the officers was very great. It blew too hard to lower the boats: no effort was or could be made to rescue any chance struggler not carried down in the vortex of the parted and sunken ship—all was blank horror.

Besides the consternation and dismay natural to the appalling accident there was the fear of the underwriters, and of the owners, and of damages, before the eyes of the captain. I was sent for aft.

“I had not charge of the deck,” said Captain Reud, looking fiercely at the first lieutenant. “*I* am not responsible for this lubberly calamity.”

“I had not the charge of the watch or the deck either,” said Mr. Farmer, in his turn looking at small Mr. Pond, who was looking aghast; “Surely I cannot be held to be responsible.”

“But you gave orders, sir—I heard you myself give the word to raise the fore-tack—that looks very like taking charge of the deck—no, no, I am not responsible.”

"Not so fast, not so fast, Mr. Pond. I only assisted you for the good of the service and to save the foresail."

Mr. Pond looked very blank indeed, until he thought of the master, and then he recovered a great portion of his usual vivacity. Small men are always vivacious.

"No, no, I am not responsible—I was only working the ship under the directions of the master. Reel the night orders, Mr. Farmer."

"The night orders be d——d!" said the gruff old master.

"I will not have my night orders d——d," said Reud. "You and the officer of the watch must share the responsibility between you."

"No offence at all, sir, to you or the night orders either. I am heartily sorry I d——d them—heartily; but in the matter of wearing this here ship precisely at that there time, I only acted under the pilot, who has charge till we are securely anchored. Surely, I can't be 'sponsible."

"Well," said the pilot, "here's a knot of tangled rope-yarn—but that yarn won't do for old Weatherbrace, for d'ye see, I'm a Sea William (civilian), and not in no ways under martial law—and I'm only aboard this here craft as respects shoals and that like—I'm clearly not 'sponsible!—nothing to do in the varsal world with working her—'sponsible! pooh!—why did ye not keep a better look-out for'ard?"

"Why, Mr. Rattlin, why?" said the captain, the first lieutenant, the lieutenant of the watch, and the master.

"I kept as good a one as I could—the lanterns were over the bows."

"You may depend upon it," said the captain, "that the matter will not be permitted to rest as it is. The owners and underwriters will demand a court of inquiry. Mr. Rattlin had charge of the forecastle at the time. Mr. Rattlin, come here, sir. You sang out, just before this calamity happened, to port the helm."

"I did, sir."

"Quartermaster," continued Reud, "did you port the helm? Now mind what you say; did you, sir? because if you *did not*, six dozen."

"We did, sir—hard-a-port."

"And the ship immediately after struck?"

"Yes, sir."

"Pooh! the case is clear—we need not talk about it any longer. A clear case, Mr. Farmer. Mr. Rattlin has charge of the forecastle—he descries a vessel ahead—he takes upon himself to order the helm a-port, and we run over and sink her accordingly. He is responsible, clearly."

"Clearly," was the answering echo from all the rejectors of responsibility.

"Mr. Rattlin, I am sorry for you. I once thought you a promising young man; but you have become quite an altered character. You seem to have lost all your zeal for the service. Zeal for the service is a thing that ought not to be lost; for a young gentleman without zeal for the service is a young gentleman, surely—you understand me—who is not zealous in the performance of his duty. I think I have made myself tolerably clear. Do you think, sir, that I should hold now the responsible commission I do hold under his Majesty, if I had been without zeal for the service? I am sorry that I have a painful duty to perform. I must place you under an arrest, till I know what may be the port-admiral's pleasure concerning this unpleasant business; for—for the loss of the *Mary Anne* of London, you are clearly responsible."

"Clearly" (*omnes rursus*).

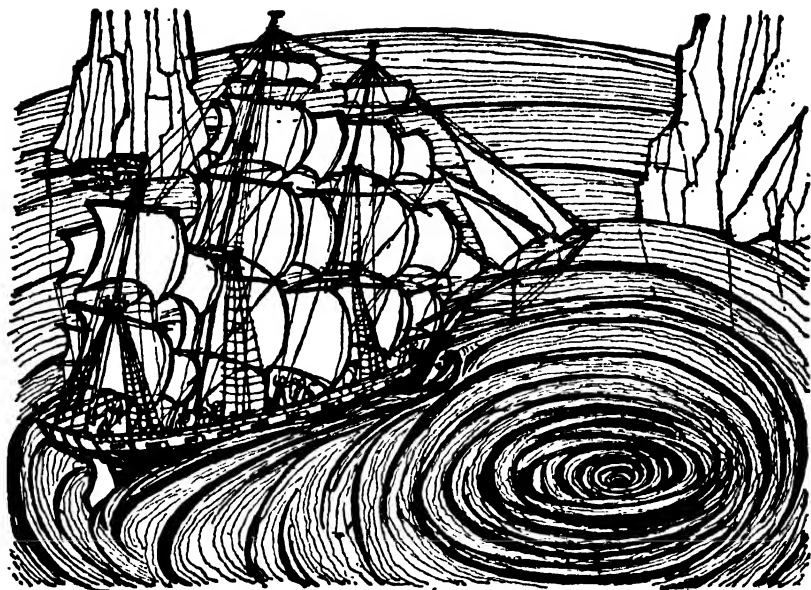
"Had you sung out hard-a-starboard instead of hard-a-port, the case might have been different."

"Clearly."

"Go down below to your berth, and consider yourself a prisoner. The young gentlemen in his Majesty's service are not permitted to run down West Indiamen with impunity."

"Clearly."

In these kind of capstan-head courts-martial, at which captains will sometimes administer reefers' law, "Woe to the weakest!" a defence was quite a work of superfluity; so consoling myself with the vast responsibility with which all at once I found myself invested, I went and turned in, anathematizing every created thing above an inch high and a foot below the same dimensions. However, in a very sound sleep I soon forgot everything—even the horrible scene I had just witnessed.



## *The Polar Ship*

EDGAR ALLAN POE

THIS eerie story of an ancient vessel with an unseeing crew, sailing through tempest and icy seas, is one of the author's typical flights of vivid fantasy. The narrative grips the reader by the power of its words and their imagery. It is taken from "MS. Found in a Bottle", one of the author's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*. At the end of the original story he added a note for the reader's consideration after finishing the tale. The note read: "'The MS. Found in a Bottle' was originally published in 1831, and it was not until many years afterwards that I became acquainted with the maps of Mercator, in which the ocean is represented as rushing, by four mouths, into the (northern) Polar Gulf, to be absorbed into the bowels of the earth; the Pole itself being represented by a black rock towering to a prodigious height."

Of my country and of my family I have little to say. Ill-usage and length of years have driven me from the one, and estranged me from the other. Hereditary wealth afforded me an education of no common order and a contemplative turn of mind enabled me to methodize the stores which early study very diligently garnered up.

After many years spent in foreign travel, I sailed in the year 18—, from the port of Batavia, in the rich and populous island of Java, on a voyage to the Archipelago of the Sunda Islands. I went as passenger—having no other inducement than a kind of nervous restlessness which haunted me as a fiend.

Our vessel was a beautiful ship of about four hundred tons, copper-fastened, and built at Bombay of Malabar teak. She was freighted with cotton-wool and oil, from the Lachadive Islands.

We got under way with a mere breath of wind, and for many days stood along the eastern coast of Java.

One evening, leaning on the taffrail, I observed a very singular isolated cloud to the N.W. It was remarkable, as well for its colour as from its being the first we had seen since our departure from Batavia. I watched it attentively until sunset, when it spread all at once to the eastward and westward, girding in the horizon with a narrow strip of vapour, and looking like a long line of low beach. My notice was soon afterwards attracted by the dusky-red appearance of the moon, and the peculiar character of the sea. The latter was undergoing a rapid change, and the water seemed more than usually transparent. Although I could distinctly see the bottom, yet heaving the lead, I found the ship in fifteen fathoms. The air now became intolerably hot, and was loaded with spiral exhalations similar to those arising from heated iron. As night came on, every breath of wind died away, and a more entire calm it is impossible to conceive. The flame of a candle burned upon the poop without the least perceptible motion, and a long hair, held between the finger and thumb, hung without the possibility of detecting a vibration. However, as the captain said he could perceive no indication of danger, and as we were drifting in bodily to shore, he ordered the sails to be furled, and the anchor let go. No watch was set, and the crew, consisting principally of Malays, stretched themselves deliberately upon deck. I went below—not without

a full presentiment of evil. Indeed, every appearance warranted me in apprehending a simoom. I told the captain my fears; but he paid no attention to what I said, and left me without deigning to give a reply. My uneasiness, however, prevented me from sleeping, and about midnight I went upon deck. As I placed my foot upon the upper step of the companion-ladder, I was startled by a loud, humming noise like that occasioned by the rapid revolution of a mill-wheel, and before I could ascertain its meaning, I found the ship quivering to its centre. In the next instant, a wilderness of foam hurled up upon our beam-ends, and, rushing over us fore and aft, swept the entire decks from stem to stern.

The extreme fury of the blast proved, in a great measure, the salvation of the ship. Although completely water-logged, yet, as her masts had gone by the board, she rose, after a minute, heavily from the sea, and, staggering awhile beneath the immense pressure of the tempest, finally righted.

By what miracle I escaped destruction it is impossible to say. Stunned by the shock of the water, I found myself, upon recovery, jammed in between the stern-post and rudder. With great difficulty I gained my feet, and, looking dizzily around, was at first struck with the idea of our being among breakers; so terrific, beyond the wildest imagination, was the whirlpool of mountainous and foaming ocean within which we were engulfed. After a while, I heard the voice of an old Swede, who had shipped with us at the moment of our leaving port. I halloed to him with all my strength, and presently he came reeling aft. We soon discovered that we were the sole survivors of the accident. All on deck, with the exception of ourselves, had been swept overboard; the captain and mates must have perished as they slept, for the cabins were deluged with water. Without assistance, we could expect to do little for the security of the ship, and our exertions were at first paralysed by the momentary expectation of going down. Our cable had, of course, parted like pack-thread at the first breath of the hurricane, or we should have been instantaneously overwhelmed. We scudded with frightful velocity before the sea, and the water made clear breaches over us. The framework of our stern was shattered excessively, and in almost every respect we had

received considerable injury; but to our extreme joy we found the pumps unchoked, and that we had made no great shifting of our ballast. The main fury of the blast had already blown over, and we apprehended little danger from the violence of the wind; but we looked forward to its total cessation with dismay; well believing, that in our shattered condition, we should inevitably perish in the tremendous swell which would ensue. But this very just apprehension seemed by no means likely to be soon verified. For five entire days and nights the hulk flew at a rate defying computation, before rapidly succeeding flaws of wind, which, without equalling the first violence of the simoom, were still more terrific than any tempest I had before encountered. Our course for the first four days was, with trifling variations, S.E. and by S.; and we must have run down the coast of New Holland. On the fifth day the cold became extreme, although the wind had hauled round to a point more to the northward. The sun arose with a sickly yellow lustre, and clambered a very few degrees above the horizon—emitting no decisive light. There were no clouds apparent, yet the wind was upon the increase, and blew with a fitful and unsteady fury. About noon, as nearly as we could guess, our attention was again arrested by the appearance of the sun. It gave out no light, properly so called, but a dull and sullen glow without reflection, as if all its rays were polarized. Just before sinking within the turgid sea, its central fires suddenly went out, as if hurriedly extinguished by some unaccountable power. It was a dim, silver-like rim, alone, as it rushed down the unfathomable ocean.

We waited in vain for the arrival of the sixth day—that day to me has not arrived—to the Swede never did arrive. Thenceforward we were enshrouded in pitchy darkness, so that we could not have seen an object at twenty paces from the ship. Eternal night continued to envelope us, all unrelieved by the phosphoric sea-brilliancy to which we had been accustomed in the tropics. We observed, too, that although the tempest continued to rage with unabated violence, there was no longer to be discovered the usual appearance of surf, or foam, which had hitherto attended us. All around were horror, and thick gloom, and a black sweltering desert of ebony. Superstitious terror

crept by degrees into the spirit of the old Swede, and my own soul was wrapped up in silent wonder. We neglected all care of the ship as worse than useless, and securing ourselves, as well as possible, to the stump of the mizen-mast, looked out bitterly into the world of ocean. We had no means of calculating time, nor could we form any guess of our situation. We were, however, well aware of having made farther to the southward than any previous navigators, and felt great amazement at not meeting with the usual impediments of ice. In the meantime every moment threatened to be our last—every mountainous billow hurried to overwhelm us. The swell surpassed anything I had imagined possible, and that we were not instantly buried is a miracle. My companion reminded me of the excellent qualities of our ship; but I could not help feeling the utter hopelessness of hope itself, and prepared myself gloomily for that death which I thought nothing could defer beyond an hour, as, with every knot of way the ship made, the swelling of the black stupendous seas became more dismally appalling. At times we gasped for breath at an elevation beyond the albatross—at times became dizzy with the velocity of our descent into some watery hell, where the air grew stagnant, and no sound disturbed the slumbers of the kraken.

We were at the bottom of one of the abysses, when a quick scream from my companion broke fearfully upon the night. "See! see!" cried he, shrieking in my ears, "Almighty God! see! see!" As he spoke, I became aware of a dull, sullen glare of red light which streamed down the sides of the vast chasm where we lay, and threw a fitful brilliancy upon our deck. Casting my eyes upwards, I beheld a spectacle which froze the current of my blood. At a terrific height directly above us, and upon the very verge of the precipitous descent, hovered a gigantic ship, of perhaps four thousand tons. Although upreared upon the summit of a wave more than a hundred times her own altitude, her apparent size still exceeded that of any ship of the line or East Indiaman in existence. Her huge hull was of a deep dingy black, unrelieved by any of the customary carvings of a ship. A single row of brass cannon protruded from her open ports, and dashed from their polished surfaces the fires of innumerable battle-lanterns, which swung to and fro about her rigging.

But what mainly inspired us with horror and astonishment was, that she bore up under a press of sail in the very teeth of that supernatural sea, and of that ungovernable hurricane. When we first discovered her, her bows were alone to be seen, as she rose slowly from the dim and horrible gulf beyond her. For a moment of intense terror she paused upon the giddy pinnacle, as if in contemplation of her own sublimity, then trembled and tottered, and—came down.

At this instant, I know not what sudden self-possession came over my spirit. Staggering as far aft as I could, I awaited fearlessly the ruin that was to overwhelm. Our own vessel was at length ceasing from her struggles, and sinking with her head to the sea. The shock of the descending mass struck her, consequently, in that portion of her frame which was already under water, and the inevitable result was to hurl me, with irresistible violence, upon the rigging of the stranger.

As I fell, the ship hove in stays, and went about; and to the confusion ensuing I attributed my escape from the notice of the crew. With little difficulty I made my way unperceived, to the main hatchway, which was partially open, and soon found an opportunity of secreting myself in the hold. Why I did so I can hardly tell. An indefinite sense of awe, which at first sight of the navigators of the ship had taken hold of my mind, was perhaps the principle of my concealment. I was unwilling to trust myself with a race of people who had offered, to the cursory glance I had taken, so many points of vague novelty, doubt, and apprehension. I therefore thought proper to contrive a hiding-place in the hold. This I did by removing a small portion of the shifting-boards, in such a manner as to afford me a convenient retreat between the huge timbers of the ship.

I had scarcely completed my work, when a footstep in the hold forced me to make use of it. A man passed by my place of concealment with a feeble and unsteady gait. I could not see his face, but had an opportunity of observing his general appearance. There was about it an evidence of great age and infirmity. His knees tottered beneath a load of years, and his entire frame quivered under the burden. He muttered to himself in a low broken tone, some words of a language which I could not understand, and groped in a corner among a pile of

### *The Polar Ship*

singular-looking instruments, and decayed charts of navigation. His manner was a wild mixture of the peevishness of second childhood and the solemn dignity of a God. He at length went on deck, and I saw him no more.

It is long since I first trod the deck of this terrible ship, and the rays of my destiny are, I think, gathering to a focus. Incomprehensible men! Wrapped up in meditations of a kind which I cannot divine, they pass me by unnoticed. Concealment is utter folly on my part, for the people *will not* see. It was but just now that I passed directly before the eyes of the mate; it was no long while ago that I ventured into the Captain's own private cabin and took thence the materials with which I write, and have written. I shall from time to time continue this journal. It is true that I may not find an opportunity of transmitting it to the world, but I will not fail to make the endeavour. At the last moment I will enclose the MS. in a bottle and cast it within the sea.

An incident has occurred which has given me new room for meditation. Are such things the operation of ungoverned chance? I had ventured upon deck and thrown myself down, without attracting any notice, among a pile of ratline-stuff and old sails, in the bottom of the yawl. While musing upon the singularity of my fate, I unwittingly daubed with a tar-brush the edges of a neatly-folded studding-sail which lay near me on a barrel. The studding-sail is now bent upon the ship, and the thoughtless touches of the brush are spread out into the word DISCOVERY.

I have made many observations lately upon the structure of the vessel. Although well armed, she is not, I think, a ship of war. Her rigging, build, and general equipment all negative a supposition of this kind. What she *is not*, I can easily perceive; what she *is*, I fear it is impossible to say. I know not how it is, but in scrutinizing her strange model and singular cast of spars, her huge size and overgrown suits of canvas, her severely simple bow and antiquated stern, there will occasionally flash across my mind a sensation of familiar things, and there is always mixed up with such indistinct shadows of recollection

an unaccountable memory of old foreign chronicles and ages long ago.

I have been looking at the timbers of the ship. She is built of a material to which I am a stranger. There is a peculiar character about the wood which strikes me as rendering it unfit for the purpose to which it has been applied. I mean its extreme *porousness*, considered independently of the worm-eaten condition which is a consequence of navigation in these seas, and apart from the rottenness attendant upon age. It will appear perhaps an observation somewhat over-curious, but this wood would have every characteristic of Spanish oak, if Spanish oak were distended by any unnatural means.

About an hour ago, I made bold to thrust myself among a group of the crew. They paid me no manner of attention, and, although I stood in the very midst of them all, seemed utterly unconscious of my presence. Like the one I had first seen in the hold, they all bore about them the marks of a hoary old age. Their knees trembled with infirmity; their shoulders were bent double with decrepitude; their shrivelled skins rattled in the wind; their voices were low, tremulous, and broken; their eyes glistened with the rheum of years; and their grey hairs streamed terribly in the tempest. Around them on every part of the deck, lay scattered mathematical instruments of the most quaint and obsolete construction.

I mentioned some time ago the bending of a studding-sail. From that period, the ship, being thrown dead off the wind, has continued her terrific course due south, with every rag of canvas packed upon her, from her trucks to her lower studding-sail booms, and rolling every moment her top-gallant yard-arms into the most appalling hell of water which it can enter into the mind of man to imagine. I have just left the deck, where I find it impossible to maintain a footing, although the crew seem to experience little inconvenience. It appears to me a miracle of miracles that our enormous bulk is not swallowed up at once and for ever. We are surely doomed to hover continually upon the brink of eternity, without taking a final plunge into the abyss. From billows a thousand times more stupendous than any I have ever seen, we glide away with the facility of the

arrowy sea-gull; and the colossal waters rear their heads above us like demons of the deep, but like demons confined to simple threats, and forbidden to destroy. I am led to attribute these frequent escapes to the only natural cause which can account for such effect. I must suppose the ship to be within the influence of some strong current, or impetuous undertow.

I have seen the captain face to face, and in his own cabin—but, as I expected, he paid me no attention. Although in his appearance there is, to a casual observer, nothing which might bespeak him more or less than man, still a feeling of irrepressible reverence and awe mingled with the sensation of wonder with which I regarded him. In stature, he is nearly my own height; that is, about five feet eight inches. He is of a well-knit and compact frame of body, neither robust nor remarkable otherwise. But it is the singularity of the expression which reigns upon the face—it is the intense, the wonderful, the thrilling evidence of old age, so utter, so extreme, which excites within my spirit a sense—a sentiment ineffable. His forehead although little wrinkled, seems to bear upon it the stamp of a myriad of years. His grey hairs are records of the past, and his greyer eyes are sybils of the future. The cabin floor was thickly strewn with strange, iron-clasped folios, and mouldering instruments of science, and obsolete long-forgotten charts. His head was bowed down upon his hands, and he pored with a fiery unquiet eye over a paper which I took to be a commission, and which, at all events, bore the signature of a monarch. He muttered to himself—as did the first seaman whom I saw in the hold—some low peevish syllables of a foreign tongue; and although the speaker was close at my elbow, his voice seemed to reach my ears from the distance of a mile.

As I imagined, the ship proves to be in a current—if that appellation can properly be given to a tide which, howling and shrieking by the white ice, thunders on to the southward with a velocity like the headlong dashing of a cataract.

To conceive the horror of my sensations is, I presume, utterly impossible; yet a curiosity to penetrate the mysteries of these awful regions predominates even over my despair, and will reconcile me to the most hideous aspect of death. It is evident that we are hurrying onwards to some exciting know-

ledge—some never-to-be-imparted secret, whose attainment is destruction. Perhaps this current leads us to the southern pole itself. It must be confessed that a supposition apparently so wild has every probability in its favour.

The crew pace the deck with unquiet and tremulous step; but there is upon their countenances an expression more of the eagerness of hope than of the apathy of despair.

In the meantime the wind is still in our poop, and as we carry a crowd of canvas the ship is at times lifted bodily from out the sea! Oh, horror upon horror!—the ice opens suddenly to the right, and to the left, and we are whirling dizzily, in immense concentric circles, round and round the borders of a gigantic amphitheatre, the summit of whose walls is lost in the darkness and the distance. But little time will be left me to ponder upon my destiny! The circles rapidly grow small—we are plunging madly within the grasp of the whirlpool—and amid a roaring, and bellowing, and thundering of ocean and of tempest, the ship is quivering—Oh God! and—going down!



## Three Castaways

R. M. BALLANTYNE

AFTER their ship had foundered in a Pacific storm Ralph Rover and his two shipmates, Jack and Peterkin, reach an uncharted island which appears to be uninhabited, and where they have to set about the serious business of providing their own food and shelter. However, danger lurks on the fringe of their Pacific island paradise, as they soon discover after venturing from their first shelter, and they decide to make weapons. Jack is elected leader of the three castaways, whose adventures and misadventures are related by Ralph in *The Coral Island*, from which this story is taken.

For several days we did not wander far from our encampment, but gave ourselves up to forming plans for the future and making our present abode comfortable.

There were various causes that induced this state of com-

parative inaction. In the first place, although everything around us was so delightful, and we could, without difficulty, obtain all that was required for our bodily comfort, we did not quite like the idea of settling down here for the rest of our lives, far away from our friends and our native land. To set energetically about the preparations for a permanent residence seemed so like making up our minds to saying adieu to home and friends for ever, that we tacitly shrank from it, and put off our preparations, for one reason and another, as long as we would. Then there was a little uncertainty still as to there being natives on the island, and we entertained a kind of faint hope that a ship might come and take us off. But as day after day passed, and neither savages nor ships appeared, we gave up all hope of an early deliverance, and set diligently to work at our homestead.

During this time, however, we had not been altogether idle. We made several experiments in cooking the cocoanut, most of which did not improve it. Then we removed our goods, and took up our abode in the cave, but found the change so bad that we returned gladly to the bower. Besides this, we bathed very frequently, and talked a great deal; at least Jack and Peterkin did—I listened. Among other useful things, Jack, who was ever the most active and diligent, converted about three inches of the hoop-iron into an excellent knife. First he beat it quite flat with the axe. Then he made a rude handle, and tied the hoop-iron to it with a piece of whip-cord, and ground it to an edge on a piece of sandstone. When it was finished he used it to shape a better handle, to which he fixed it with a strip of his cotton handkerchief. However, the whip-cord, thus set free, was used by Peterkin as a fishing-line. He merely tied a piece of oyster to the end of it. This the fish were allowed to swallow, and then they were pulled quickly ashore. But, as the line was very short, and we had no boat, the fish we caught were exceedingly small.

One day Peterkin came up from the beach, where he had been angling, and said, in a very cross tone, "I'll tell you what, Jack, I'm not going to be humbugged with catching such contemptible things any longer. I want you to swim out with me on your back, and let me fish in deep water!"

"Dear me, Peterkin!" replied Jack, "I had no idea you were

taking the thing so much to heart, else I would have got you out of that difficulty long ago. Let me see"—and Jack looked down at a piece of timber, on which he had been labouring, with a peculiar gaze of abstraction, which he always assumed when trying to invent or discover anything.

"What say you to building a boat?" he inquired, looking up hastily.

"Take far too long," was the reply; "can't be bothered waiting. I want to begin at once!"

Again Jack considered. "I have it!" he cried. "We'll fell a large tree and launch the trunk of it in the water, so that when you want to fish you've nothing to do but to swim out to it."

"Would not a small raft do better?" said I.

"Much better; but we have no ropes to bind it together with. Perhaps we may find something hereafter that will do us as well, but, in the meantime, let us try the tree."

This was agreed on, so we started off for a spot not far distant, where we knew of a tree that would suit us, which grew near the water's edge. As soon as we reached it, Jack threw off his coat, and, wielding the axe with his sturdy arms, hacked and hewed at it for a quarter of an hour without stopping. Then he paused, and while he sat down to rest I continued the work. Then Peterkin made a vigorous attack on it, so that when Jack renewed his powerful blows, a few minutes' cutting brought it down with a terrible crash.

"Hurrah! now for it," cried Jack; "let us off with its head."

So saying, he began to cut through the stem again, at about six yards from the thick end. This done, he cut three strong, short poles or levers from the stout branches, with which to roll the log down the beach into the sea; for, as it was nearly two feet thick at the large end, we could not move it without such helps. With the levers, however, we rolled it slowly into the sea.

Having been thus successful in launching our vessel, we next shaped the levers into rude oars or paddles, and then attempted to embark. This was easy enough to do; but after seating ourselves astride the log, it was with the utmost difficulty we kept it from rolling round and plunging us into the water. Not that we minded; but we preferred, if possible, to fish in dry clothes. To be sure, our trousers were necessarily wet, as our legs were

dangling in the water on each side of the log; but as they could be easily dried we did not care. After half an hour's practice, we became expert enough to keep our balance pretty steadily. Then Peterkin laid down his paddle, and, having baited his line with a whole oyster, dropping it into deep water.

"Now, then, Jack," said he, "be cautious; steer clear o' that sea-weed. There! that's it; gently now, gently! I see a fellow at least a foot long down there, coming to—ha! that's it. Oh, bother! he's off!"

"Did he bite?" said Jack, urging the log onwards a little with his paddle.

"Bite? ay! He took it into his mouth, but the moment I began to haul he opened his jaws and let it out again."

"Let him swallow it next time," said Jack, laughing at the melancholy expression of Peterkin's visage.

"There he's again!" cried Peterkin, his eyes flashing with excitement. "Look out! Now then! No! Yes! No! Why, the brute *won't* swallow it!"

"Try to haul him up by the mouth, then," cried Jack. "Do it gently."

A heavy sigh and a look of blank despair showed that poor Peterkin had tried and failed again.

"Never mind, lad," said Jack, in a voice of sympathy; "we'll move on, and offer it to some other fish." So saying, Jack plied his paddle; but scarcely had he moved from the spot, when a fish with an enormous head and a little body darted from under a rock and swallowed the bait at once.

"Got him this time—that's a fact!" cried Peterkin, hauling in the line. "He's swallowed the bait right down to his tail, I declare. Oh, what a thumper!"

As the fish came struggling to the surface, we leaned forward to see it, and overbalanced the log. Peterkin threw his arms round the fish's neck, and in another instant we were all floundering in the water!

A shout of laughter burst from us as we rose to the surface like three drowned rats, and seized hold of the log. We soon recovered our position, and sat more warily, while Peterkin secured the fish, which had well-nigh escaped in the midst of our struggles. It was little worth having, however; but as

### *Three Castaways*

Peterkin remarked, it was better than the smouts he had been catching for the last two or three days; so we laid it on the log before us, and, having re-baited the line, dropped it in again for another.

Now, while we were thus intent upon our sport, our attention was suddenly attracted by a ripple on the sea, just a few yards away from us. Peterkin shouted to us to paddle in that direction, as he thought it was a big fish, and we might have a chance of catching it. But Jack, instead of complying, said, in a deep, earnest tone of voice, which I never before heard him use—

“Haul up your line, Peterkin; seize your paddle; quick—it’s a shark!”

The horror with which we heard this may well be imagined, for it must be remembered that our legs were hanging down in the water, and we could not venture to pull them up without upsetting the log. Peterkin instantly hauled up the line, and grasping his paddle, exerted himself to the utmost, while we also did our best to make for the shore. But we were a good way off, and the log being, as I have said before, very heavy, moved but slowly through the water. We now saw the shark quite distinctly swimming round and round us, its sharp fin every now and then protruding above the water. Jack knew it was making up its mind to attack us, so he urged us, vehemently, to paddle for our lives, while he himself set us the example. Suddenly he shouted, “Look out! there he comes!” and in a second, we saw the monstrous fish dive close under us, and turn half over on his side. But we all made a great commotion with our paddles, which no doubt frightened it away for that time, as we saw it immediately circling round us as before.

“Throw the fish to him,” cried Jack, in a quick suppressed voice; “we’ll make the shore in time yet, if we can keep him off for a few minutes.”

Peterkin stopped one instant to obey the command, and then plied his paddle again with all his might. No sooner had the fish fallen on the water, than we observed the shark to sink. In another second we saw its white breast rising; for sharks always turn over on their sides when about to seize their pray, their mouths not being at the point of their heads like those of other fish, but, as it were, under their chins. In another moment his

snout rose above the water; his wide jaws, armed with a terrific double row of teeth, appeared. The dead fish was engulfed, and the shark sank out of sight. But Jack was mistaken in supposing that it would be satisfied. In a very few minutes it returned to us, and its quick motions led us to fear that it would attack us at once.

"Stop paddling," cried Jack suddenly. "I see it coming up behind us. Now, obey my orders *quickly*. Our lives may depend on it. Ralph, Peterkin, do your best to *balance* the log. Don't look out for the shark. Don't glance behind you. Do nothing but balance the log."

Peterkin and I instantly did as we were ordered, being only too glad to do anything that afforded us a chance or a hope of escape, for we had implicit confidence in Jack's courage and wisdom. For a few seconds, that seemed long minutes to my mind, we sat thus silently; but I could not resist glancing backward, despite the orders to the contrary. On doing so, I saw Jack sitting rigid like a statue, with his paddle raised, and his eyebrows bent over his eyes, which glared savagely from beneath them down into the water. I also saw the shark, to my horror, quite close under the log, in the act of darting towards Jack's foot. I could scarce suppress a cry on beholding this. In another moment the shark rose. Jack drew his leg suddenly from the water, and threw it over the log. The monster's snout rubbed against the log as it passed, and revealed its hideous jaws, into which Jack instantly plunged the paddle, and thrust it down its throat. So violent was this act that Jack rose to his feet in performing it; the log was thereby rolled completely over, and we were once more plunged into the water. We all rose, spluttering and gasping, in a moment.

"Now, then, strike out for shore," cried Jack. "Here, Peterkin, catch hold of my collar, and kick out with a will."

Peterkin did as he was desired, and Jack struck out with such force that he cut through the water like a boat; while I, being free from all encumbrance, succeeded in keeping up with him. As we had by this time drawn pretty near to the shore, a few minutes more sufficed to carry us into shallow water; and, finally, we landed in safety, though very much exhausted, and not a little frightened by our terrible adventure.

Our encounter with the shark was the first great danger that

had befallen us since landing on this island, and we felt very seriously affected by it, especially when we considered that we had so often unwittingly incurred the same danger before while bathing. We were now forced to take to fishing again in the shallow water, until we should succeed in constructing a raft. What troubled us most, however, was that we were compelled to forgo our morning swimming excursions. We did, indeed, continue to enjoy our bathe in the shallow water, but Jack and I found that one great source of our enjoyment was gone, when we could no longer dive down among the beautiful coral groves at the bottom of the lagoon. We had come to be so fond of this exercise, and to take such an interest in watching the formations of coral, and the gambols of the many beautiful fish amongst the forests of red and green sea-weeds, that we had become quite familiar with the appearance of the fish and the localities that they chiefly haunted. We had also become expert divers. But we made it a rule never to stay long under water at a time. Jack told me that to do so often was bad for the lungs, and, instead of affording us enjoyment, would ere long do us a serious injury. So we never stayed at the bottom as long as we might have done, but came up frequently to the top for fresh air, and dived down again immediately. Sometimes, when Jack happened to be in a humorous frame, he would seat himself at the bottom of the sea on one of the brain-corals, as if he were seated on a large paddock-stool, and then make faces at me, in order, if possible, to make me laugh under water. At first when he took me unawares, he nearly succeeded, and I had to shoot to the surface in order to laugh; but afterwards I became aware of his intentions, and, being naturally of a grave disposition, I had no difficulty in restraining myself. I used often to wonder how poor Peterkin would have liked to be with us; and he sometimes expressed much regret at being unable to join us. I used to do my best to gratify him, poor fellow, by relating all the wonders that we saw; but this, instead of satisfying, seemed only to whet his curiosity the more, so one day we prevailed on him to try to go down with us. But, although a brave boy in every other way, Peterkin was very nervous in the water, and it was with difficulty we got him to consent to be taken down, for he could never have managed to push himself down to the

bottom without assistance. But no sooner had we pulled him down a yard or so into the deep, clear water, than he began to struggle and kick violently; so we were forced to let him go, when he rose out of the water like a cork, gave a loud gasp and a frightful roar, and struck out for the land with the utmost possible haste.

Now all this pleasure we were to forgo, and when we thought thereon, Jack and I felt very much depressed in our spirits. I could see, also, that Peterkin grieved and sympathized with us, for, when talking about this matter, he refrained from jesting and bantering us upon it.

As, however, a man's difficulties usually set him upon devising methods to overcome them, whereby he often discovers better things than those he may have lost, so this our difficulty induced us to think of searching for a large pool among the rocks, where the water should be deep enough for diving, yet so surrounded by rocks as to prevent sharks from getting at us. And such a pool we afterwards found, which proved to be very much better than our most sanguine hopes anticipated. It was situated not more than ten minutes' walk from our camp, and was in the form of a small, deep bay or basin, the entrance to which, besides being narrow, was so shallow that no fish so large as a shark could get in, at least, not unless he should be a remarkably thin one.

Inside of this basin, which we called our Water Garden, the coral formations were much more wonderful, and the seaweed plants far more lovely and vividly coloured, than in the lagoon itself. And the water was so clear and still, that, although very deep, you could see the minutest object at the bottom. Besides this, there was a ledge of rock which overhung the basin at its deepest part, from which we could dive pleasantly, and whereon Peterkin could sit and see not only all the wonders I had described to him, but also see Jack and me creeping amongst the marine shrubbery at the bottom, like—as he expressed it—“two great white sea-monsters.” During these excursions of ours to the bottom of the sea, we began to get an insight into manners and customs of its inhabitants, and to make discoveries of wonderful things, the like of which we never before conceived. Among other things, we were deeply interested in the operations of the little coral insect, which, I was informed by Jack, is

supposed to have entirely constructed many of the numerous islands in the Pacific Ocean.

I also became much taken up with the manners and appearance of the anemones, and star-fish, and crabs, and sea-urchins, and such-like creatures; and was not content with watching those I saw during my dives in the Water Garden, but I must needs scoop out a hole in the coral rock close to it, which I filled with salt water, and stocked with sundry specimens of anemones and shell-fish, in order to watch more closely how they were in the habit of passing their time. Our burning-glass also now became a great treasure to me, as it enabled me to magnify, and so to perceive more clearly the forms and actions of these curious creatures of the deep.

Having now got ourselves into a very comfortable condition, we began to talk of a project which we had long had in contemplation—namely, to travel entirely round the island; in order, first, to ascertain whether it contained any other productions which might be useful to us; and, second, to see whether there might be any place more convenient and suitable for our permanent residence than that on which we were now encamped. Not that we were in any degree dissatisfied with it; on the contrary, we entertained quite a home-feeling to our bower and its neighbourhood; but, if a better place did exist, there was no reason why we should not make use of it. At any rate, it would be well to know of its existence.

We had much earnest talk over this matter. But Jack proposed that, before undertaking such an excursion, we should supply ourselves with good defensive arms; for as we intended not only to go round all the shore, but to ascend most of the valleys, before returning home, we should be likely to meet in with he would not say *dangers*, but at least with everything that existed on the island, whatever that might be.

"Besides," said Jack, "it won't do for us to live on cocoanuts and oysters always. No doubt they are very excellent in their way, but I think a little animal food now and then would be agreeable as well as good for us; and as there are many small birds among the trees some of which are probably very good to eat, I think it would be a capital plan to make bows and arrows, with which we could easily knock them over."

"First-rate!" cried Peterkin. "You will make the bows, Jack, and I'll try my hand at the arrows. The fact is, I'm quite tired of throwing stones at the birds. I began the very day we landed, I think, and have persevered up to the present time, but I've never hit anything yet."

"You forget," said I, "you hit me one day on the shin."

"Ah, true," replied Peterkin, "and a precious shindy you kicked up in consequence. But you were at least four yards away from the impudent parakeet I aimed at; so you see what a horribly bad shot I am."

"But," said I, "Jack, you cannot make three bows and arrows before tomorrow, and would it not be a pity to waste time, now that we have made up our minds to go on this expedition? Suppose that you make one bow and arrow for yourself, and we can take our own clubs?"

"That's true, Ralph. The day is pretty far advanced, and I doubt if I can make even one bow before dark. To be sure, I might work by fire-light, after the sun goes down."

We had, up to this time, been in the habit of going to bed with the sun, and as we had no pressing call to work o' nights; and, indeed, our work during the day was usually hard enough—what between fishing, and improving our bower, and diving in the Water Garden, and rambling in the woods; so that, when night came, we were usually very glad to retire to our beds. But now that we had a desire to work at night, we felt a wish for candles. — "Won't a good blázing fire give you light enough?" inquired Peterkin.

"Yes," replied Jack, "quite enough; but then it will give us a great deal more than enough of heat in this warm climate of ours."

"True" said Peterkin; "I forgot that. It would roast us."

"Well, as you're always doing that at any rate," remarked Jack, "we could scarcely call it a change. But the fact is, I've been thinking over this subject before. There is a certain nut growing in these islands which is called the candle-nut, because the natives use it instead of candles, and I know all about it, and how to prepare it for burning——"

"Then why don't you do it?" interrupted Peterkin. "Why have you kept us in the dark so long, you vile philosopher?"

"Because," said Jack, "I have not seen the tree yet, and

### *Three Castaways*

I'm not sure that I should know either the tree or the nuts if I did see them. I believe the nut is about the size of a walnut; and I think that the leaves are white, but I am not sure."

"Eh! ha! hum!" cried Peterkin, "I saw a tree answering to that description this very day."

"Did you?" cried Jack. "Is it far from this?"

"No, not half a mile."

"Then lead me to it," said Jack, seizing his axe.

In a few minutes we were all three pushing through the underwood of the forest, headed by Peterkin.

We soon came to the tree in question, which, after Jack had closely examined it, we concluded must be the candlenut-tree. Its leaves were of a beautiful silvery white, and formed a fine contrast to the dark-green foliage of the surrounding trees. We immediately filled our pockets with nuts, after which Jack said—

"Now, Peterkin, climb that cocoanut-tree and cut me one of the long branches."

This was soon done, but it cost some trouble, for the stem was very high, and as Peterkin usually pulled nuts from the younger trees, he was not much accustomed to climbing the high ones. The leaf or branch was a very large one, and we were surprised at its size and strength. Viewed from a little distance, the cocoanut-tree seems to be a tall, straight stem, without a single branch except at the top, where there is a tuft of feathery-looking leaves, that seem to wave like soft plumes in the wind. But when we saw one of these leaves or branches at our feet, we found it to be a strong stalk, about fifteen feet long, with a number of narrow, pointed leaflets ranged alternately on each side.

Jack now took one of the leaflets, and, cutting out the central spine or stalk, hurried back with it to our camp. Having made a small fire, he baked the nuts, slightly and then peeled off the husks. After this he wished to bore a hole in them, which not having anything better at hand at the time, he did with the point of our useless pencil-case. Then he strung them on the cocoanut spine, and putting a light to the topmost nut, we found to our joy that it burned with a clear, beautiful flame; upon seeing which, Peterkin sprang up and danced round the fire for at least five minutes in the excess of his satisfaction.

"Now, lads," said Jack, extinguishing our candle, "the sun

will set in an hour, so we have no time to lose. I shall go and cut a young tree to make my bow out of, and you had better each of you go and select good strong sticks for clubs, and we'll set to work at them after dark."

As it was getting dark we lighted our candle, and placing it in a holder made of two crossing branches, inside our bower, we seated ourselves on our leafy beds and began to work.

"I intend to appropriate the bow for my own use," said Jack, chipping the piece of wood he had brought with his axe. "I used to be a pretty fair shot once. But what's that you're doing?" he added looking at Peterkin, who had drawn the end of a long pole into the tent, and was endeavouring to fit a small piece of the hoop-iron to the end of it.

"I'm going to enlist into the Lancers," answered Peterkin. "You see, Jack, I find the club rather an unwieldy instrument for my delicately-formed muscles, and I flatter myself I shall do more execution with a spear."

"Well, if length constitutes power," said Jack, "you'll certainly be invincible."

The pole which Peterkin had cut was full twelve feet long, being a very strong, but light and tough young tree, which merely required thinning at the butt to be a serviceable weapon.

"That's a very good idea," said I.

"Which—this?" inquired Peterkin, pointing to the spear.

"Yes," I replied.

"Humph!" said he; "you'd find it pretty tough and matter-of-fact idea if you had it stuck through your gizzard, old boy!"

"I mean the idea of making it is a good one," said I, laughing. "And, now I think of it, I'll change my plan too. I don't think much of a club, so I'll make me a sling. I used to be very fond of slinging, ever since I read of David slaying Goliath the Philistine; and I was once thought to be an expert at it."

So I set to work to manufacture a sling. For a long time we all worked very busily without speaking. At length Peterkin had thinned down his spear and tied an iron point very cleverly to the end of it; I had formed a sling, the lines of which were composed of thin strips of cocoanut cloth, plaited; and Jack made a stout bow, nearly five feet long, with two arrows, feathered with two or three large plumes which some bird had

dropped. They had no barbs, but Jack said that if arrows were well feathered they did not require iron points, but would fly quite well if merely sharpened to a point; which I did not know before.

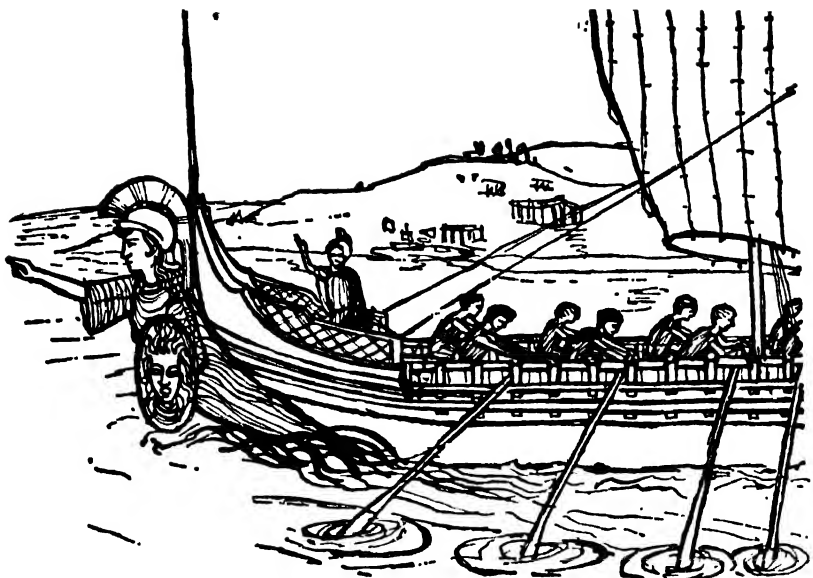
"A feathered arrow without a barb," said he, "is a good weapon, but a barbed arrow without feathers is utterly useless."

The string of the bow was formed of one piece of whip-cord, part of which, as he did not like to cut it, was rolled round the bow.

Although thus prepared for a start on the morrow, we thought it wise to exercise ourselves a little in the use of our weapons before starting, so we spent the whole of the next day in practising. And it was well we did so, for we found that our arms were very imperfect, and that we were far from perfect in the use of them. First, Jack found that the bow was much too strong, and he had to thin it. Also, the spear was much too heavy, and so had to be reduced in thickness, although nothing would induce Peterkin to have it shortened. My sling answered very well, but I had fallen so much out of practice that my first stone knocked off Peterkin's hat, and narrowly missed making a second Goliath of him. However, after having spent the whole day in diligent practice, we began to find some of our former expertness returning—at least Jack and I did. As for Peterkin, being naturally a neat-handed boy, he soon handled his spear well, and could run full tilt at a cocoanut, and hit it with great precision once out of every five times.

But I feel satisfied that we owed much of our rapid success to the unflagging energy of Jack, who insisted that, since we had made him captain, we should obey him; and he kept us at work from morning till night, perseveringly, at the same thing. Peterkin wished very much to run about and stick his spear into everything he passed; but Jack put up a cocoanut, and would not let him leave off running at that for a moment, except when he wanted to rest. We laughed at Jack for this, but we were both convinced that it did us much good.

That night we examined and repaired our arms ere we lay down to rest, although we were much fatigued, in order that we might be in readiness to set out on our expedition at daylight on the following morning.



## *The Argonauts Set Sail*

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

JASON, one of the heroes of Greek mythology, was the son of the dethroned King of Iolchos. To recover his father's throne he had first to secure the Golden Fleece, but before he could set out on such a hazardous quest he had to seek advice from the Talking Oak of Dodona. What he was told by the forest oracle sent him on a new journey, which resulted in the building of a large galley called the *Argo*. For crew and companions in his quest of the Golden Fleece the ambitious Jason summoned forty-nine heroes of ancient Greece, who were henceforth to have their names linked with his as the Argonauts. How Jason eventually secured the Golden Fleece, and triumphed with the other Argonauts, is told in *Tanglewood Tales*, from which this story is taken.

Jason looked up among the knotted branches and green leaves,

and into the mysterious heart of the old tree, and spoke aloud, as if he were addressing some person who was hidden in the depths of the foliage.

"What shall I do," said he, "in order to win the Golden Fleece?"

At first there was a deep silence, not only within the shadow of the Talking Oak, but all through the solitary wood. In a moment or two, however, the leaves of the oak began to stir and rustle, as if a gentle breeze were wandering amongst them, although the other trees of the wood were perfectly still. The sound grew louder, and became like the roar of a high wind. By-and-by, Jason imagined that he could distinguish words, but very confusedly, because each separate leaf of the tree seemed to be a tongue, and the whole myriad of tongues were babbling at once. But the noise waxed broader and deeper, until it resembled a tornado sweeping through the oak, and making one great utterance out of the thousands and thousands of little murmurs which each leafy tongue had caused by its rustling. And now, though it still had the tone of a mighty wind roaring among the branches, it was also like a deep bass voice, speaking as distinctly as a tree could be expected to speak, the following words:

"Go to Argus, the shipbuilder, and bid him build a galley with fifty oars."

Then the voice melted again into the indistinct murmur of the rustling leaves, and died gradually away. When it was quite gone, Jason felt inclined to doubt whether he had actually heard the words, or whether his fancy had not shaped them out of the ordinary sound made by a breeze while passing through the thick foliage of the tree.

But on inquiry among the people of Iolchos, he found that there was really a man in the city by the name of Argus who was a very skilful builder of vessels. At Jason's request, Argus readily consented to build him a galley so big that it should require fifty strong men to row it; although no vessel of such a size and burden had heretofore been seen in the world. So the head carpenter and all his journeymen and apprentices began their work; and for a good while afterwards there they were, busily employed, hewing out the timbers, and making a great

clatter with their hammers; until the new ship, which was called the *Argo*, seemed to be quite ready for sea. And, as the Talking Oak had already given him such good advice, Jason thought that it would not be amiss to ask for a little more. He visited it again, therefore, and standing beside its huge, rough trunk, inquired what he should do next.

This time, there was no such universal quivering of the leaves throughout the whole tree, as there had been before. But after a while, Jason observed that the foliage of a great branch which stretched above his head had begun to rustle, as if the wind were stirring that one bough while all the other boughs of the oak were at rest.

"Cut me off!" said the branch, as soon as it could speak distinctly; "cut me off! cut me off! and carve me into a figure-head for your galley."

Accordingly, Jason took the branch at its word and lopped it off the tree. A carver in the neighbourhood engaged to make the figure-head. He was a tolerably good workman, and had already carved several figure-heads with great staring eyes that never wink at the dash of the spray. But (what was very strange) the carver found that his hand was guided by some unseen power, and by a skill beyond his own, and that his tools shaped out an image which he had never dreamed of. When the work was finished, it turned out to be the figure of a beautiful woman, with a helmet on her head, from beneath which the long ringlets fell down upon her shoulders. On the left arm was a shield, and in its centre appeared a lifelike representation of the head of Medusa with the snaky locks. The right arm was extended, as if pointing onward. The face of this wonderful statue, though not angry or forbidding, was so grave and majestic that perhaps you might call it severe; and as for the mouth, it seemed just ready to uncloset its lips and utter words of the deepest wisdom.

Jason was delighted with the oaken image, and gave the carver no rest until it was completed and set up in the vessel's prow.

"And now," cried he, as he stood gazing at the calm, majestic face of the statue, "I must go to the Talking Oak, and inquire what next to do."

"There is no need of that, Jason," said a voice which, though it was far lower, reminded him of the mighty tones of the great oak. "When you desire good advice you can seek it of me."

Jason had been looking straight into the face of the image when these words were spoken. But he could hardly believe either his ears or his eyes. The truth was, however, that the oaken lips had moved, and, to all appearance, the voice had proceeded from the statue's mouth. Recovering a little from his surprise, Jason bethought himself that the image had been carved out of the wood of the Talking Oak, and that, therefore, it was really no great wonder, but, on the contrary, the most natural thing in the world that it should possess the faculty of speech. It would have been very odd, indeed, if it had not. But certainly it was a great piece of good fortune that he should be able to carry so wise a block of wood along with him on his perilous voyage.

"Tell me, wondrous image," exclaimed Jason—"since you inherit the wisdom of the Speaking Oak of Dodona, whose daughter you are—tell me, where shall I find fifty bold youths who will take each of them an oar of my galley? They must have sturdy arms to row, and brave hearts to encounter perils, or we shall never win the Golden Fleece."

"Go," replied the oaken image, "go, summon all the heroes of Greece."

And, in fact, considering what a great deed was to be done, could any advice be wiser than this which Jason received from the figure-head of his vessel? He lost no time in sending messengers to all the cities, and making known to the whole people of Greece that Prince Jason, the son of King Æson, was going in quest of the Fleece of Gold, and that he desired the help of forty-nine of the bravest and strongest young men alive, to row his vessel and share his dangers. And Jason himself would be the fiftieth.

At this news, the adventurous youths all over the country began to bestir themselves. Some of them had already fought with giants, and slain dragons; and the younger ones, who had not yet met with such good fortune, thought it a shame to have lived so long without getting astride of a flying serpent, or

sticking their spears into a Chimæra, or, at least, thrusting their right arms down a monstrous lion's throat. There was a fair prospect that they would meet with plenty of such adventures before finding the Golden Fleece. As soon as they could furbish up their helmets and shields, therefore, and gird on their trusty swords, they came thronging to Iolchos, and clambered on board the new galley. Shaking hands with Jason, they assured him that they did not care a pin for their lives, but would help row the vessel to the remotest edge of the world, and as much farther as he might think it best to go.

Many of these brave fellows had been educated by Chiron, the four-footed pedagogue, and were therefore old schoolmates of Jason, and knew him to be a lad of spirit. The mighty Hercules, whose shoulders afterwards upheld the sky, was one of them. And there were Castor and Pollux, the twin brothers, who were never accused of being chicken-hearted although they had been hatched out of an egg; and Theseus, who was so renowned for killing the Minotaur, and Lynceus, with his wonderfully sharp eyes which could see through a millstone, or look right down into the depths of the earth, and discover the treasures that were there; and Orpheus, the very best of harpers.

One of the rowers was a beautiful young woman named Atalanta, who had been nursed among the mountains by a bear. So light of foot was this fair damsel that she could step from one foamy crest of a wave to the foamy crest of another, without wetting more than the sole of her sandal. But in my opinion, the most remarkable of this famous company were two sons of the North Wind (airy youngsters and of rather a blustering disposition) who had wings on their shoulders, and, in case of a calm, could puff out their cheeks and blow almost as fresh a breeze as their father. I ought not to forget the prophets and conjurers, of whom there were several in the crew, and who could foretell what would happen tomorrow or the next day, or a hundred years hence, but were generally quite unconscious of what was passing at the moment.

Jason appointed Tiphys to be helmsman, because he was a star-gazer, and knew the points of the compass. Lynceus, on account of his sharp sight, was stationed as a look-out in the prow, where he saw a whole day's sail ahead, but was rather

apt to overlook things that lay directly under his nose. If the sea only happened to be deep enough, however, Lynceus could tell you exactly what kind of rocks or sands were at the bottom of it; and he often cried out to his companions that they were sailing over heaps of sunken treasure, which yet he was none the richer for beholding. To confess the truth, few people believed him when he said it.

Well! But when the Argonauts, as these fifty brave adventurers were called, had prepared everything for the voyage, an unforeseen difficulty threatened to end it before it was begun. The vessel, you must understand, was so long, and broad, and ponderous, that the united force of all the fifty was insufficient to shove her into the water. Hercules, I suppose, had not grown to his full strength, else he might have set her afloat as easily as a little boy launches his boat upon a puddle. But here were these fifty heroes, pushing, and straining, and growing red in the face, without making the *Argo* start an inch. At last, quite wearied out, they sat themselves down on the shore exceedingly disconsolate, and thinking that the vessel must be left to rot and fall in pieces, and that they must either swim across the sea or lose the Golden Fleece.

All at once Jason bethought himself of the galley's miraculous figure-head.

"O daughter of the Talking Oak," cried he, "how shall we set to work to get our vessel into the water?"

"Seat yourselves," answered the image (for it had known what ought to be done from the very first, and was only waiting for the question to be put)—"seat yourselves and handle your oars, and let Orpheus play upon his harp."

Immediately the fifty heroes got on board and, seizing their oars, held them perpendicularly in the air, while Orpheus (who liked such a task far better than rowing) swept his fingers across the harp. At the first ringing note of the music they felt the vessel stir. Orpheus thrummed away briskly, and the galley slid at once into the sea, dipping her prow so deeply that the figure-head drank the wave with its marvellous lips, and rising again as buoyant as a swan. The rowers plied their fifty oars; the white foam boiled up before the prow; the water gurgled and bubbled in their wake; while Orpheus continued

to play so lively a strain of music that the vessel seemed to dance over the billows by way of keeping time to it.

In order to make the time pass away more pleasantly during the voyage, the heroes talked about the Golden Fleece. It originally belonged it appears, to a Bœotian ram, who had taken on his back two children, when in danger of their lives, and fled with them over land and sea as far as Colchis. In memory of this good deed, the fleece of the ram was miraculously changed to gold and became one of the most beautiful objects ever seen on earth. It was hung upon a tree in a sacred grove, where it had now been kept I know not how many years, and was the envy of mighty kings, who had nothing so magnificent in any of their palaces.

If I were to tell you all the adventures of the Argonauts, it would take me till nightfall, and perhaps a great deal longer. There was no lack of wonderful events, as you may judge from what you have already heard. At a certain island they were hospitably received by King Cyzicus, its sovereign, who made a feast for them, and treated them like brothers. But the Argonauts saw that this good king looked downcast and very much troubled, and they therefore inquired of him what was the matter. King Cyzicus hereupon informed them that he and his subjects were greatly abused and incommoded by the inhabitants of a neighbouring mountain, who made war upon them, and killed many people, and ravaged the country. And while they were talking about it, Cyzicus pointed to the mountain and asked what they saw there.

"I see them very plainly," remarked Lynceus, whose eyes, you know, were as far-sighted as a telescope. "They are a band of enormous giants, all of whom have six arms apiece, and a club, a sword, or some other weapon in each of their hands."

"You have excellent eyes," said King Cyzicus. "Yes; they are six-armed giants as you say, and these are the enemies whom I and my subjects have to contend with."

The next day, when the Argonauts were about setting sail, down came these terrible giants stepping a hundred yards at a stride, brandishing their six arms apiece, and looking very formidable, so far aloft in the air. Each of these monsters was

able to carry on a whole war by himself, for with one arm he could fling immense stones, and wield a club with another, and a sword with a third, while the fourth was poking a long spear at the enemy, and the fifth and sixth were shooting him with a bow and arrow. Jason and his friends went boldly to meet them, slew a great many, and made the rest take to their heels, so that if the giants had had six legs apiece instead of six arms it would have served them better to run away with.

Another strange adventure happened when the voyagers came to Thrace, where they found a poor blind king named Phineus, deserted by his subjects, and living in a very sorrowful way all by himself. On Jason's inquiring whether they could do him any service, the king answered that he was terribly tormented by three great winged creatures, called Harpies, which had the faces of women, and the wings, bodies, and claws of vultures. These ugly wretches were in the habit of snatching away his dinner, and allowed him no peace of his life. Upon hearing this the Argonauts spread a plentiful feast on the sea-shore. Hardly was the table set, before the three hideous vulture women came flapping their wings, seized the food in their talons, and flew off as fast as they could. But the two sons of the North Wind drew their swords, spread out their pinions, and set off through the air in pursuit of the thieves, whom they at last overtook among some islands after a chase of hundreds of miles. The two winged youths blustered terribly at the Harpies, and so frightened them with their drawn swords that they solemnly promised never to trouble King Phineus again.

Then the Argonauts sailed onward. At one time they landed on an island, and were reposing on the grass, when they suddenly found themselves assailed by what seemed a shower of steel-headed arrows. Some of them stuck in the ground, while others hit against their shields, and several penetrated their flesh. The fifty heroes started up and looked about them for the hidden enemy, but could find none, nor see any spot, on the whole island, where even a single archer could lie concealed. Still, however, the steel-headed arrows came whizzing among them; and, at last, happening to look upward, they beheld a large flock of birds hovering and wheeling aloft, and

shooting their feathers down upon the Argonauts. Jason ran to the galley.

"O daughter of the Speaking Oak," cried he, "we need your wisdom more than ever before! We are in great peril from a flock of birds, who are shooting us with their steel-pointed feathers. What can we do to drive them away?"

"Make a clatter on your shields," said the image.

Jason hurried back to his companions (who were far more dismayed than when they fought with the six-armed giants), and bade them strike with their swords upon their brazen shields. Forthwith the fifty heroes set heartily to work, and raised such a terrible clatter that the birds made what haste they could to get away; and though they had shot half the feathers out of their wings they were soon seen skimming among the clouds, a long distance off, and looking like a flock of wild geese.

While the Argonauts remained on this island, they saw a small vessel approaching the shore in which were two young princes.

When the princes understood whither the Argonauts were going, they offered to turn back and guide them to Colchis. At the same time, however, they spoke as if it were very doubtful whether Jason would succeed in getting the Golden Fleece. According to their account, the tree on which it hung was guarded by a terrible dragon, who never failed to devour at one mouthful every person who might venture within his reach.

"My young friends," quietly replied Jason, "I do not wonder that you think the dragon very terrible. You have grown up from infancy in the fear of this monster, and therefore still regard him with the awe that children feel for the bugbears and hobgoblins which their nurses have talked to them about. But, in my view of the matter, the dragon is merely a pretty large serpent, who is not half so likely to snap me up at one mouthful as I am to cut off his ugly head, and strip the skin from his body. At all events, turn back who may, I will never see Greece again unless I carry with me the Golden Fleece."

"We will none of us turn back!" cried his nine-and-forty brave comrades. "Let us get on board the galley this instant;

*The Argonauts Set Sail*

and if the dragon is to make a breakfast of us, much good may it do him."

And Orpheus (whose custom it was to set everything to music) began to harp and sing most gloriously, and made every mother's son of them feel as if nothing in this world were so delectable as to fight dragons, and nothing so truly honourable as to be eaten up at one mouthful in case of the worst.



## *The Acapulco Galleon*

RICHARD WALTER

THE author of this narrative, a naval chaplain of the eighteenth century, was able to write his account of Anson's four-year voyage round the world when given access to the famous sailor's personal papers and private journals. The voyage started with a squadron of six ships leaving England in September 1740. Fifteen months later only one, the *Centurion*, was still sailing under Anson's flag, and she was leaking an inch an hour. In June 1744 Anson arrived back in English home waters, having completed one of the most memorable voyages in the history of navigation and of the Royal Navy. With him he brought a great treasure, much of which was taken from the Acapulco galleon. He was raised to the peerage three years later. This story of the taking of the galleon is from *Anson's Voyage Round the World*.

### *The Acapulco Galleon*

When the *Centurion* left the port of Macão, she stood for some days to the westward, and, on the 1st of May, they saw part of the island of Formosa; and steering thence to the southward, they, on the 4th of May, were in the latitude of the Bashee Islands, as laid down by Dampier; but they suspected his account of inaccuracy, as they knew that he had been considerably mistaken in the latitude of the south end of Formosa, and therefore they kept a good look-out, and about seven in the evening discovered from the mast-head five small islands, which were judged to be the Bashees.

After getting a sight of the Bashee Islands, they stood between the S. and S.W. for Cape Espiritu Santo, and the 20th of May at noon they first discovered that cape, which about four o'clock they brought to bear S.S.W. near eleven leagues distant. It appeared to be of a moderate height, with several round hummocks on it. As it was known that there were sentinels placed upon this cape to make signals to the Acapulco ship when she first falls in with the land, the commodore immediately tacked, and ordered the top-gallant sails to be taken in, to prevent being discovered. And this being the station where it was resolved to cruise for the galleons, they kept the cape between the south and the west.

It was the last of May when they arrived off this cape, and the month of June being that in which the Manila ships are usually expected, the *Centurion's* people were now waiting each hour with the utmost impatience for the happy crisis which was to balance the account of all their past calamities. As from this time there was but small employment for the crew, the commodore ordered them almost every day to be exercised in the working of the great guns, and in the use of their small arms. This had been his practice, more or less, at every convenient season during the whole course of his voyage, and the advantages which he received from it in his engagement with the galleon were an ample recompense for all his care and attention. Indeed, it should seem that there are few particulars of a commander's duty of more importance, how much soever it may have been sometimes overlooked or misunderstood: since it will, I suppose, be confessed that in two ships of war equal in the number of their men and guns, the disproportion

of strength arising from a greater or less dexterity in the use of their great guns and small arms is what can scarcely be balanced by any other circumstances whatever. For, as these are the weapons with which they are to engage, what greater inequality can there be betwixt two contending parties than that one side should perfectly understand the management of them, and should have the skill to employ them in the most effectual manner for the annoyance of their enemy; while the other side should, by their awkward handling of their arms, render them rather terrible to themselves than mischievous to their antagonist? This seems so obvious and natural a conclusion, that a person unacquainted with these matters would suppose the first care of a commander to be the training his people to the ready use of their arms.

But human affairs are not always conducted by the plain dictates of common sense. There are many other principles which influence our transactions, and there is one in particular, which though of a very erroneous complexion, is scarcely ever excluded from our most serious deliberations; I mean custom, or the practice of those who have preceded us. This is usually a power too mighty for reason to grapple with, and is often extremely troublesome to those who oppose it, since it has much of superstition in its nature, and pursues all those who question its authority with unrelenting vehemence. However, in these latter ages of the world, some lucky encroachments have been made upon its prerogative, and it may surely be expected that the gentlemen of the navy, whose particular profession hath within a few years been considerably improved by a number of new inventions, will of all others be the readiest to give up any usage which has nothing to plead in its behalf but prescription, and will not suppose that every branch of their business hath already received all the perfection of which it is capable. Indeed, it must be owned that if a dexterity in the use of small arms, for instance, hath been sometimes less attended to on board our ships of war than might have been wished for, it hath been rather owing to unskilful methods of teaching it than to negligence: since the common sailors, how strongly soever attached to their own prejudices, are very quick-sighted in finding out the defects of others, and have ever

shown a great contempt for the formalities practised in the training of land troops to the use of their arms. But when those who have undertaken to instruct the seamen have contented themselves with inculcating only what was useful, in the simplest manner, they have constantly found their people sufficiently docile, and the success hath even exceeded their expectation. Thus on board Mr. Anson's ship, where they were taught no more of the manual exercise than the shortest method of loading with cartridges, and were constantly trained to fire at a mark, which was usually hung at the yard-arm, and where some little reward was given to the most expert, the whole crew, by this management, were rendered extremely skilful, for besides an uncommon readiness in loading, they were all of them good marksmen, and some of them most extraordinary ones. Whence I doubt not but, in the use of small arms, they were more than a match for double their number who had not been habituated to the same kind of exercise. But to return.

It was the last of May, as hath been already said, when the *Centurion* arrived off Cape Espiritu Santo, and consequently the next day the month began in which the galleons were to be expected. The commodore therefore made all necessary preparations for receiving them, hoisting out his long-boat and lashing her alongside, that the ship might be ready for engaging if they fell in with the galleons during the night. All this time too he was very solicitous to keep at such a distance from the cape as not to be discovered. But it hath been since learnt, that notwithstanding his care, he was seen from the land, and advice of him was sent to Manila, where, though it was at first disbelieved, yet, on reiterated intelligence (for it seems he was seen more than once), the merchants were alarmed, and the governor was applied to, who undertook (the commerce supplying the necessary sums) to fit out a force consisting of two ships of thirty-two guns, one of twenty guns, and two sloops of ten guns each, to attack the *Centurion* on her station. With this view some of these vessels actually weighed, but the principal ship not being ready, and the monsoon being against them, the commerce and the governor disagreed, so that the enterprise was laid aside. This frequent discovery of the *Centurion* from the shore was somewhat extraordinary, since the pitch of the cape

is not high, and she usually kept from ten to fifteen leagues distant, though once indeed, by an indraught of the tide, as was supposed, they found themselves in the morning within seven leagues of the land.

As the month of June advanced, the expectancy and impatience of the commodore's people each day increased. And I think no better idea can be given of their great eagerness on this occasion than by copying a few paragraphs from the journal of an officer who was then on board, as it will, I presume, be a more natural picture of the full attachment of their thoughts to the business of their cruise than can be given by any other means. The paragraphs I have selected, as they occur in order of time, are as follow:

"May 31. Exercising our men at their quarters, in great expectation of meeting with the galleons very soon."

"June 3. Keeping in our stations, and looking out for the galleons."

"June 5. Begin now to be in great expectation."

"June 11. Begin to grow impatient at not seeing the galleons."

"June 13. The wind having blown fresh easterly for the forty-eight hours past, gives us great expectations of seeing the galleons soon."

"June 15. Cruising on and off, and looking out strictly."

"June 19. The galleons, if they arrive at all, must appear soon."

From these samples it is sufficiently evident how completely the treasure of the galleons had engrossed their imagination, and how anxiously they passed the latter part of their cruise, when the certainty of the arrival of those vessels was dwindled down to probability only, and that probability became each hour more and more doubtful. However, on the 20th of June they were relieved out of this state of uncertainty, for at sunrise they discovered a sail from the mast-head, in the S.E. quarter. On this, a general joy spread through the whole ship, for they had no doubt but this was one of the galleons, and they expected soon to descry the other. The commodore instantly stood towards her, and at half an hour after seven they were near enough to see her from the *Centurion's* deck, at which time the galleon

fired a gun, and took in her top-gallant sails. This was supposed to be a signal to her consort to hasten her up, and therefore the *Centurion* fired a gun to leeward to amuse her. The commodore was surprised to find that during all this interval the galleon did not change her course, but continued to bear down upon him; for he hardly believed, what afterwards appeared to be the case, that she knew his ship to be the *Centurion*, and resolved to fight him.

About noon the commodore was little more than a league distant from the galleon, and could fetch her wake, so that she could not now escape; and, no second ship appearing, it was concluded that she had been separated from her consort. Soon after, the galleon hauled up her fore-sail and brought to under top-sails, with her head to the northward, hoisting Spanish colours, and having the standard of Spain flying at the top-gallant mast-head. Mr. Anson in the meantime had prepared all things for an engagement on board the *Centurion*, and had taken every possible measure, both for the most effectual exertion of his small strength, and for the avoiding the confusion and tumult too frequent in actions of this kind. He picked out about thirty of his choicest hands and best marksmen, whom he distributed into his tops, and who fully answered his expectation by the signal services they performed. As he had not hands enough remaining to quarter a sufficient number to each great gun in the customary manner, he therefore, on his lower tier, fixed only two men to each gun, who were to be solely employed in loading it, whilst the rest of his people were divided into different gangs of ten or twelve men each, who were continually moving about the decks to run out and fire such guns as were loaded. By this management he was enabled to make use of all his guns, and instead of whole broadsides, with intervals between them, he kept up a constant fire without intermission, whence he doubted not to procure very signal advantages. For it is common with the Spaniards to fall down upon the decks when they see a broadside preparing, and to continue in that posture till it is given, after which they rise again, and, presuming the danger to be for some time over, work their guns, and fire with great briskness, till another broadside is ready. But the firing gun by gun, in the manner

directed by the commodore, rendered this practice of theirs impossible.

The *Centurion* being thus prepared, and nearing the galleon apace, there happened, a little after noon, several squalls of wind and rain, which often obscured the galleon from their sight; but whenever it cleared up they observed her resolutely lying to. Towards one o'clock, the *Centurion* hoisted her broad pendant and colours, she being then within gun-shot of the enemy, and the commodore perceiving the Spaniards to have neglected clearing their ship till that time, as he saw them throwing overboard cattle and lumber, he gave orders to fire upon them with the chase guns, to disturb them in their work, and prevent them from completing it, though his general directions had been not to engage before they were within pistol-shot. The galleon returned the fire with two of her stern chase; and the *Centurion* getting her sprit-sail yard fore and aft, that, if necessary, she might be ready for boarding, the Spaniards, in a bravado, rigged their sprit-sail yard fore and aft likewise. Soon after, the *Centurion* came abreast of the enemy within pistol-shot, keeping to the leeward of them, with a view of preventing their putting before the wind and gaining the port of Jalapay, from which they were about seven leagues distant. And now the engagement began in earnest, and for the first half-hour Mr. Anson over-reached the galleon and lay on her bow, where, by the great wideness of his ports, he could traverse almost all his guns upon the enemy, whilst the galleon could only bring a part of hers to bear. Immediately on the commencement of the action, the mats with which the galleon had stuffed her netting took fire and burnt violently, blazing up half as high as the mizen-top. This accident, supposed to be caused by the *Centurion's* wads, threw the enemy into the utmost terror, and also alarmed the commodore, for he feared lest the galleon should be burnt, and lest he himself too might suffer by her driving on board him. However, the Spaniards at last freed themselves from the fire, by cutting away the netting and tumbling the whole mass, which was in flames, into the sea. All this interval the *Centurion* kept her first advantageous position, firing her cannon with great regularity and briskness, whilst at the same time the galleon's decks lay open to her top-

men, who having at their first volley driven the Spaniards from their tops, made prodigious havoc with their small arms, killing or wounding every officer but one that appeared on the quarter-deck, and wounding in particular the general of the galleon himself. Thus the action proceeded for at least half an hour; but then the *Centurion* lost the superiority arising from her original situation, and was close alongside the galleon, and the enemy continued to fire briskly for near an hour longer; yet even in this posture the commodore's grape-shot swept their decks so effectually, and the number of their slain and wounded became so considerable, that they began to fall into great disorder, especially as the general, who was the life of the action, was no longer capable of exerting himself. Their confusion was visible from on board the commodore, for the ships were so near that some of the Spanish officers were seen running about with much assiduity, to prevent the desertion of their men from their quarters. But all their endeavours were in vain, for after having, as a last effort, fired five or six guns with more judgment than usual, they yielded up the contest, and, the galleon's colours being singed off the ensign staff in the beginning of the engagement, she struck the standard at her main top-gallant mast-head; the person who was employed to perform this office having been in imminent peril of being killed, had not the commodore, who perceived what he was about, given express orders to his people to desist from firing.

Thus was the *Centurion* possessed of this rich prize, amounting in value to near a million and a half of dollars. She was called the *Nostra Signora de Cabadonga*, and was commanded by General Don Jeronimo de Mentero, a Portuguese, who was the most approved officer for skill and courage of any employed in that service. The galleon was much larger than the *Centurion*, and had five hundred and fifty men, and thirty-six guns mounted for action, besides twenty-eight pedreroes in her gunwale, quarters, and tops, each of which carried a four-pound ball. She was very well furnished with small arms, and was particularly provided against boarding, both by her close quarters, and by a strong network of two-inch rope which was laced over her waist, and was defended by half-pikes. She had sixty-seven killed in the action, and eighty-four wounded, whilst the

*Centurion* had only two killed, and a lieutenant and sixteen wounded, all of whom but one recovered: of so little consequence are the most destructive arms in untutored and unpractised hands.

The treasure thus taken by the *Centurion* having been, for at least eighteen months, the great object of their hopes, it is impossible to describe the transport on board when, after all their reiterated disappointments, they at last saw their wishes accomplished. But their joy was near being suddenly damped by a most tremendous incident, for no sooner had the galleon struck, than one of the lieutenants coming to Mr. Anson to congratulate him on his prize, whispered him at the same time that the *Centurion* was dangerously on fire near the powder-room. The commodore received this dreadful news without any apparent emotion, and taking care not to alarm his people, gave the necessary orders for extinguishing the fire, which was happily done in a short time, though its appearance at first was extremely terrible. It seems some cartridges had been blown up by accident between decks, and the blast had communicated its flame to a quantity of oakum in the after hatchway, near the after powder-room, where the great smother and smoke of the oakum occasioned the apprehension of a more extended and mischievous conflagration. All hopes too of avoiding its fury by escaping on board the prize had instantly vanished, for at the same moment the galleon fell on board the *Centurion* on the star-board quarter, though she was fortunately cleared without doing or receiving any considerable damage.

The commodore appointed the Manila vessel to be a post ship in his Majesty's service, and gave the command of her to Mr. Saumarez, his first lieutenant, who before night sent on board the *Centurion* all the Spanish prisoners, except such as were thought the most proper to be retained to assist in navigating the galleon. And now the commodore learnt from some of these prisoners that the other ship, which he had kept in the port of Acapulco the preceding year, instead of returning in company with the present prize, as was expected, had set sail from Acapulco alone much sooner than usual, and had, in all probability, got into the port of Manila long before the *Centurion* arrived off Cape Espiritu Santo, so that Mr. Anson,

notwithstanding his present success, had great reason to regret his loss of time at Macão, which prevented him from taking two rich prizes instead of one.

The commodore, when the action was ended, resolved to make the best of his way with his prize for the river of Canton, being the meantime fully employed in securing his prisoners, and in removing the treasure from on board the galleon into the *Centurion*. The last of these operations was too important to be postponed, for as the navigation to Canton was through seas but little known, and where, from the season of the year, very tempestuous weather might be expected, it was of great consequence that the treasure should be sent on board the *Centurion*, which ship, by the presence of the commander-in-chief, the larger number of her hands, and her other advantages, was doubtless better provided against all the casualties of winds and seas than the galleon. And the securing the prisoners was a matter of still more consequence, as not only the possession of the treasure but the lives of the captors depended thereon. This was indeed an article which gave the commodore much trouble and disquietude, for they were above double the number of his own people, and some of them, when they were brought on board the *Centurion*, and had observed how slenderly she was manned, and the large proportion which the striplings bore to the rest, could not help expressing themselves with great indignation to be thus beaten by a handful of boys. The method which was taken to hinder them from rising was by placing all but the officers and the wounded in the hold, where, to give them as much air as possible, two hatchways were left open; but then (to avoid any danger that might happen whilst the *Centurion's* people should be employed upon deck) there was a square partition of thick planks, made in the shape of a funnel, which enclosed each hatchway on the lower deck, and reached to that directly over it on the upper deck. These funnels served to communicate the air to the hold better than could have been done without them, and, at the same time, added greatly to the security of the ship, for they being seven or eight feet high, it would have been extremely difficult for the Spaniards to have clambered up; and still to augment that difficulty, four swivel guns, loaded with musket-bullets, were planted at the mouth

of each funnel, and a sentinel with a lighted match was posted there ready to fire into the hold amongst them, in case of any disturbance. Their officers, who amounted to seventeen or eighteen, were all lodged in the first lieutenant's cabin, under a guard of six men; and the general, as he was wounded, lay in the commodore's cabin with a sentinel always with him; every prisoner, too, was sufficiently apprised that any violence or disturbance would be punished with instant death. And, that the *Centurion's* people might be at all times prepared, if, notwithstanding these regulations, any tumult should arise, the small arms were constantly kept loaded in a proper place, whilst all the men went armed with cutlasses and pistols; and no officer ever pulled off his clothes when he slept, or, when he lay down, omitted to have his arms always ready by him.

These measures were obviously necessary, considering the hazards to which the commodore and his people would have been exposed had they been less careful. Indeed, the sufferings of the poor prisoners, though impossible to be alleviated, were much to be commiserated; for the weather was extremely hot, the stench of the hold loathsome beyond all conception, and their allowance of water but just sufficient to keep them alive, it not being practicable to spare them more than at the rate of a pint a day for each, the crew themselves having only an allowance of a pint and a half. All this considered, it was wonderful that not a man of them died during their long confinement, except three of the wounded, who expired the same night they were taken, though it must be confessed that the greatest part of them were strangely metamorphosed by the heat of the hold; for when they were first brought on board, they were slightly robust fellows, but when, after above a month's imprisonment, they were discharged in the river of Canton, they were reduced to mere skeletons, and their air and looks corresponded much more to the conception formed of ghosts and spectres than to the figure and appearance of real men.

Thus employed in securing the treasure and the prisoners, the commodore, as hath been said, stood for the river of Canton, and on the 30th of June, at six in the evening, got sight of Cape Delangano, which then bore west ten leagues distant. The

next day he made the Bashee Islands, and the wind being so far to the northward that it was difficult to weather them, it was resolved to stand through between Grafton and Monmouth Islands, where the passage seemed to be clear, though in getting through the sea had a very dangerous aspect, for it rippled and foamed with all the appearances of being full of breakers, which was still more terrible as it was the night. But the ships got through very safe, the prize keeping ahead; and it was found that the agitation of the sea which had alarmed them, had been occasioned only by a strong tide. I must here observe that though the Bashee Islands are usually reckoned to be no more than five, yet there are many more lying about them to the westward, which, seeing the channels amongst them are not at all known, makes it advisable for ships rather to pass to the northward or southward than through them; as indeed the commodore proposed to have gone to the northward between them and Formosa, had it been possible for him to have weathered them. From hence the *Centurion* steering the proper course for the river of Canton, she, on the 8th of July, discovered the island of Supata, the westernmost of the Lema Islands. And on the 11th. having taken on board two Chinese pilots, one for the *Centurion*, and the other for the prize, they came to an anchor off the city of Macão.

By this time the particulars of the cargo of the galleon were well ascertained, and it was found that she had on board 1,313,843 pieces of eight, and 35,682 oz. of virgin silver, besides some cochineal and a few other commodities, which, however, were but of small account in comparison of the specie. And this being the commodore's last prize, it hence appears that all the treasure taken by the *Centurion* was not much short of £400,000 independent of the ships and merchandise, which she either burnt or destroyed, and which, by the most reasonable estimation, could not amount to so little as £600,000 more; so that the whole damage done the enemy by our squadron did doubtless exceed a million sterling. To which, if there be added the great expense of the court of Spain, in fitting out Pizarro, and in paying the additional charges in America, incurred on our account, together with the loss of their men-of-war, the total of all these articles will be a most

exorbitant sum, and is the strongest conviction of the utility of this expedition, which, with all its numerous disadvantages, did yet prove so extremely prejudicial to the enemy. I shall only add that there was taken on board the galleon several draughts and journals, from some of which many of the particulars recited are collected. Among the rest there was found a chart of all the ocean between the Philippines and the coast of Mexico, which was what was made use of by the galleon in her own navigation. With this digression I shall leave the *Centurion* and her prize at anchor off Macão, preparing to enter the river of Canton.



## *Under the Ice*

JULES VERNE

PROFESSOR ARONNAX is aboard a revolutionary kind of ship for his time, a submarine named the *Nautilus*, commanded by an intrepid navigator named Captain Nemo. The professor, who is accompanied by his personal servant Conseil, tells the story of the submarine's extraordinary adventures of a hundred years ago on an incredible voyage across and under the world's oceans. The exploits are related in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, from which this story of polar daring is taken.

The *Nautilus* was steadily pursuing its southerly course, following the fiftieth meridian with considerable speed. On the 14th of March I saw floating ice in latitude 55°, merely pale bits of debris from twenty to twenty-five feet long, forming banks over which the sea curled. The *Nautilus* remained on the surface of the ocean. In the atmosphere towards the southern horizon

stretched a white dazzling band. English whalers have given it the name of "ice blink". However thick the clouds may be, it is always visible, and announces the presence of an ice pack or bank. Accordingly, larger blocks soon appeared, whose brilliancy changed with the caprices of the fog. Some of these masses showed green veins, as if long undulating lines had been traced with sulphate of copper; others resembled enormous amethysts with the light shining through them. Some reflected the light of day upon a thousand crystal facets. Others shaded with vivid calcareous reflections resembled a perfect town of marble. The more we neared the south, the more these floating islands increased both in number and importance.

At the sixtieth degree of latitude, every pass had disappeared. But seeking carefully, Captain Nemo soon found a narrow opening, through which he boldly slipped, knowing, however, that it would close behind him. Thus, guided by this clever hand, the *Nautilus* passed through all the ice with a precision which quite charmed Conseil; icebergs or mountains, ice-fields or smooth plains, seeming to have no limits, drift ice or floating ice packs, plains broken up, called *palchs* when they are circular, and streams when they are made up of long strips. The temperature was very low; the thermometer exposed to the air marked two or three degrees below zero, but we were warmly clad with fur, at the expense of the sea-bear and seal. The interior of the *Nautilus*, warmed regularly by its electric apparatus, defied the most intense cold. Besides, it would only have been necessary to go some yards beneath the waves to find a more bearable temperature. Two months earlier we should have had perpetual daylight in these latitudes; but already we had three or four hours night, and by and by there would be six months of darkness in these circumpolar regions. On the 15th of March we were in the latitude of New Shetland and South Orkney. The Captain told me that formerly numerous tribes of seals inhabited them; but that English and American whalers, in their rage for destruction, massacred both old and young; thus where there was once life and animation, they had left silence and death.

About eight o'clock in the morning of the 16th of March the *Nautilus*, following the fifty-fifth meridian, cut the antarctic

polar circle. Ice surrounded us on all sides, and closed the horizon. But Captain Nemo went from one opening to another, still going higher. I cannot express my astonishment at the beauties of these new regions. The ice took most surprising forms. Here the grouping formed an oriental town, with innumerable mosques and minarets; there a fallen city thrown to the earth, as it were, by some convulsion of nature. The whole aspect was constantly changed by the oblique rays of the sun, or lost in the greyish fog amidst hurricanes of snow. Detonations and falls were heard on all sides, great overthrows of icebergs, which altered the whole landscape like a diorama. Often seeing no exit, I thought we were definitely prisoners; but instinct guiding him at the slightest indication, Captain Nemo would discover a new pass. He was never mistaken when he saw the thin threads of bluish water trickling along the ice-fields; and I had no doubt that he had already ventured into the midst of these antarctic seas before. On the 16th of March, however, the ice-fields absolutely blocked our road. It was not the iceberg itself, as yet, but vast fields cemented by the cold. But this obstacle could not stop Captain Nemo: he hurled himself against it with frightful violence. The *Nautilus* entered the brittle mass like a wedge, and split it with frightful crackings. It was the battering ram of the ancients hurled by infinite strength. The ice, thrown high in the air, fell like hail around us. By its own power of impulsion our apparatus made a canal for itself; sometimes carried away by its own impetus it lodged on the ice-field, crushing it with its weight, and sometimes buried beneath it, dividing it by a simple pitching movement, producing large rents in it. Violent gales assailed us at this time, accompanied by thick fogs, through which, from one end of the platform to the other, we could see nothing. The wind blew sharply from all points of the compass, and the snow lay in such hard heaps that we had to break it with blows of a pickaxe. The temperature was always at five degrees below zero; every outward part of the *Nautilus* was covered with ice. A rigged vessel could never have worked its way there, for all the rigging would have been entangled in the blocked-up gorges. A vessel without sails, with electricity for its motive power, and wanting no coal, could alone brave such high latitudes.

At length, on the 18th of March, after many useless assaults, the *Nautilus* was positively blocked. It was no longer either streams, packs, or ice-fields, but an interminable and immovable barrier, formed by mountains soldered together.

The sun appearing for an instant at noon, Captain Nemo took an observation as near as possible, which gave our situation at  $51^{\circ} 30'$  longitude and  $67^{\circ} 39'$  of south latitude. We had advanced one degree more in this antarctic region. Of the liquid surface of the sea there was no longer a glimpse. Under the spur of the *Nautilus* lay stretched a vast plain, entangled with confused blocks. Here and there sharp points, and slender needles rising to a height of 200 feet; further on a steep shore, hewn as it were with an axe, and clothed with greyish tints; huge mirrors, reflecting a few rays of sunshine, half drowned in the fog. And over this desolate face of Nature a stern silence reigned, scarcely broken by the flapping of the wings of petrels and puffins. Everything was frozen—even the noise. The *Nautilus* was then obliged to stop in its adventurous course amid these fields of ice. In spite of our efforts, in spite of the powerful means employed to break up the ice, the *Nautilus* remained immovable. Generally, when we can proceed no further, we have return still open to us; but here return was as impossible as advance, for every pass had closed behind us; and for the few moments when we were stationary, we were likely to be entirely blocked, which did, indeed, happen about two o'clock in the afternoon, the fresh ice forming around its sides with astonishing rapidity. I was obliged to admit that Captain Nemo was more than imprudent. I was on the platform at that moment. The Captain had been observing our situation for some time past, when he said to me—

“Well, sir, what do you think of this?”

“I think that we are caught, Captain.”

“So, M. Aronnax, you really think that the *Nautilus* cannot disengage itself?”

“With difficulty, Captain; for the season is already too far advanced for you to reckon on the breaking up of the ice.”

“Ah! sir,” said Captain Nemo, in an ironical tone, “you will always be the same. You see nothing but difficulties and

obstacles. I affirm that not only can the *Nautilus* disengage itself, but also that it can go further still."

"Further to the south?" I asked, looking at the Captain.

"Yes, sir; it shall go to the pole."

"To the pole!" I exclaimed, unable to repress a gesture of incredulity.

"Yes," replied the Captain, coldly, "to the antarctic pole—to that unknown point from whence springs every meridian of the globe. *You* know whether I can do as I please with the *Nautilus*!"

Yes, I knew that. I knew that this man was bold, even to rashness. But to conquer those obstacles which bristled round the south pole, rendering it more inaccessible than the north, which had not yet been reached by the boldest navigators,—was it not a mad enterprise, one which only a maniac would have conceived? It then came into my head to ask Captain Nemo if he had ever discovered that pole which had never yet been trodden by a human creature?

"No, sir," he replied; "but we will discover it together. Where others have failed, *I* will not fail. I have never yet led my *Nautilus* so far into southern seas; but, I repeat, it shall go further yet."

"I can well believe you, Captain," said I, in a slightly ironical tone. "I believe you! Let us go ahead! There are no obstacles for us! Let us smash this iceberg! Let us blow it up; and if it resists, let us give the *Nautilus* wings to fly over it!"

"Over it, sir!" said Captain Nemo, quietly; "not *over* it, but *under* it!"

"Under it!" I exclaimed, a sudden idea of the Captain's projects flashing upon my mind. I understood; the wonderful qualities of the *Nautilus* were going to serve us in this super-human enterprise.

"I see we are beginning to understand one another, sir," said the Captain, half smiling. "You begin to see the possibility—I should say the success—of this attempt. That which is impossible for an ordinary vessel, is easy to the *Nautilus*. If a continent lies before the pole, it must stop before the continent; but if, on the contrary, the pole is washed by open sea, it will go even to the pole."

"Certainly," said I, carried away by the Captain's reasoning; "if the surface of the sea is solidified by the ice, the lower depths are free by the providential law which has placed the maximum of density of the waters of the ocean one degree higher than freezing point.

"The only difficulty," continued Captain Nemo, "is that of remaining several days without renewing our provision of air."

"Is that all? The *Nautilus* has vast reservoirs; we can fill them, and they will supply us with all the oxygen we want."

"Well thought of, M. Aronnax," replied the Captain, smiling. "But not wishing you to accuse me of rashness, I will first give you all my objections."

"Have you any more to make?"

"Only one. It is possible, if the sea exists at the south pole, that it may be covered; and, consequently, we shall be unable to come to the surface."

"Good, sir! but do you forget that the *Nautilus* is armed with a powerful spur, and could we not send it diagonally against these fields of ice, which would open at the shock?"

"Ah! sir, you are full of ideas to-day."

The preparations for this audacious attempt now began. The powerful pumps of the *Nautilus* were working air into the reservoirs and storing it at high pressure. About four o'clock, Captain Nemo announced the closing of the panels on the platform. I threw one last look at the massive iceberg which we were going to cross. The weather was clear, the atmosphere pure enough, the cold very great, being twelve degrees below zero; but the wind having gone down, this temperature was not so unbearable. About ten men mounted the sides of the *Nautilus*, armed with pickaxes to break the ice around the vessel, which was soon free. The operation was quickly performed, for the fresh ice was still very thin. We all went below. The usual reservoirs were filled with the newly liberated water, and the *Nautilus* soon descended. I had taken my place with Conseil in the saloon; through the open window we could see the lower beds of the Southern Ocean.

For a part of the night the novelty of the situation kept us

at the window. The sea was lit with the electric lantern; but it was deserted; fishes did not sojourn in these imprisoned waters: they only found there a passage to take them from the antarctic ocean to the open polar sea. Our pace was rapid; we could feel it by the quivering of the long steel body. About two in the morning, I took some hours' repose, and Conseil did the same. In crossing the waist I did not meet Captain Nemo: I supposed him to be in the pilot's cage. The next morning, the 19th of March, I took my post once more in the saloon. The electric log told me that the speed of the *Nautilus* had been slackened. It was then going towards the surface; but prudently emptying its reservoirs very slowly. My heart beat fast. Were we going to emerge and regain the open polar atmosphere? No! A shock told me that the *Nautilus* had struck the bottom of the iceberg, still very thick, judging from the deadened sound. We had indeed "struck," to use a sea expression, but in an inverse sense, and at a thousand feet deep. This would give three thousand feet of ice above us; one thousand being above the water-mark. The iceberg was then higher than at its borders—not a very reassuring fact. Several times that day the *Nautilus* tried again, and every time it struck the wall which lay like a ceiling above it. That night no change had taken place in our situation. Still ice between four and five hundred yards in depth! It was evidently diminishing, but still what a thickness between us and the surface of the ocean! It was then eight. According to the daily custom on board the *Nautilus*, its air should have been renewed four hours ago; but I did not suffer much, although Captain Nemo had not yet made any demand upon his reserve of oxygen. My sleep was painful that night; hope and fear besieged me by turns: I rose several times. The groping of the *Nautilus* continued. About three in the morning, I noticed that the lower surface of the iceberg was only about fifty feet deep. One hundred and fifty feet now separated us from the surface of the waters. The iceberg was by degrees becoming an ice-field, the mountain a plain. My eyes never left the manometer. We were still rising diagonally to the surface, which sparkled under the electric rays. The iceberg was stretching both above and beneath into lengthening slopes; mile after mile it was getting thinner. At

length, at six in the morning of that memorable day, the 19th of March, the door of the saloon opened, and Captain Nemo appeared.

"The sea is open!" was all he said.

I rushed on the platform. Yes! the open sea, with but a few scattered pieces of ice and moving icebergs;—a long stretch of sea; a world of birds in the air, and myriads of fishes under those waters, which varied from intense blue to olive green, according to the bottom. The thermometer marked three degrees centigrade above zero. It was comparatively spring, shut up as we were behind this iceberg, whose lengthened mass was dimly seen on our northern horizon.

"Are we at the pole?" I asked the Captain, with a beating heart.

"I do not know," he replied. "At noon I will take our bearings."

"But will the sun show himself through this fog?" said I, looking at the leaden sky.

"However little it shows, it will be enough," replied the Captain.

About ten miles south, a solitary island rose to a height of one hundred and four yards. We made for it, but carefully, for the sea might be strewn with banks. One hour afterwards we had reached it, two hours later we had made the round of it. It measured four or five miles in circumference. A narrow canal separated it from a considerable stretch of land, perhaps a continent, for we could not see its limits. The boat was launched; the Captain, two of his men bearing instruments, Conseil, and myself, were in it. It was ten in the morning. A few strokes of the oar brought us to the sand, where we ran ashore. Conseil was going to jump on to the land, when I held him back.

"Sir," said I to Captain Nemo, "to you belongs the honour of first setting foot on this land."

"Yes, sir," said the Captain; "and if I do not hesitate to tread this south pole, it is because, up to this time, no human being has left a trace there."

Saying this, he jumped lightly on to the sand. His heart beat with emotion. He climbed a rock, sloping to a little promontory,

and there, with his arms crossed, mute and motionless, and with an eager look, he seemed to take possession of these southern regions. After five minutes passed in this ecstasy, he turned to us.

"When you like, sir."

I landed, followed by Conseil, leaving the two men in the boat. For a long way the soil was composed of a reddish, sandy stone, something like crushed brick, scorix, streams of lava, and pumice stones. One could not mistake its volcanic origin. In some parts, slight curls of smoke emitted a sulphurous smell, proving that the internal fibres had lost nothing of their expansive powers, though, having climbed a high acclivity, I could see no volcano for a radius of several miles. We know that in those antarctic countries, James Ross found two craters, the Erebus and Terror, in full activity, on the 167th meridian, latitude  $77^{\circ} 32'$ . The vegetation of this desolate continent seemed to me much restricted.

There appeared on the high bottoms some coral shrubs, of that kind which, according to James Ross, live in the antarctic seas to the depth of more than 1000 yards. Then there were little kingfishers, as well as a large number of asteriads, peculiar to these climates, and starfish studding the soil. But where life abounded most was in the air. There thousands of birds fluttered and flew of all kinds, deafening us with their cries; others crowded the rocks, looking at us as we passed by without fear, and pressing familiarly close by our feet. There were penguins, so agile in the water, that they have been taken for the rapid bonitos, heavy and awkward as they are on the ground. Albatrosses passed in the air (the expanse of their wings being at least four yards and a half), and justly called the vultures of the ocean; some gigantic petrels, and some damiers, a kind of small duck, the under part of whose body is black and white; then there were a whole series of petrels, some whitish, with brown-bordered wings, others blue, peculiar to the antarctic seas, and so oily, as I told Conseil, that the inhabitants of the Ferroe Islands had nothing to do before lighting them, but to put a wick in.

The fog did not lift, and at eleven the sun had not yet shown itself. Its absence made me uneasy. Without it no observations

were possible. How then could we decide whether we had reached the pole? Soon the fog turned to snow.

"Till to-morrow," said the Captain, quietly, and we returned to the *Nautilus* amid these atmospheric disturbances.

The tempest of snow continued till the next day. It was impossible to remain on the platform. From the saloon, where I was taking notes of incidents happening during this excursion to the polar continent, I could hear the cries of petrels and albatrosses sporting in the midst of this violent storm. The *Nautilus* did not remain motionless, but skirted the coast, advancing ten miles more to the south in the half light left by the sun as it skirted the edge of the horizon. The next day, the 20th of March, the snow had ceased. The cold was a little greater, the thermometer showing two degrees below zero. The fog was rising, and I hoped that that day our observations might be taken. Captain Nemo not having yet appeared, the boat took Conseil and myself to land.

It was now eight in the morning. Four hours remained to us before the sun could be observed with advantage. I directed our steps towards a vast bay cut in the steep granite shore. There, I can aver that earth and ice were lost to sight by the numbers of sea-mammals covering them, and I involuntarily sought for old Proteus, the mythological shepherd who watched these immense flocks of Neptune. There were more seals than anything else, forming distinct groups, male and female the father watching over his family, the mother suckling her little ones, some already strong enough to go a few steps. When they wished to change their place, they took little jumps, made by the contraction of their bodies, and helped awkwardly enough by their imperfect fin, which, as with the lamantin, their congener, forms a perfect forearm.

We began to climb over stones which the ice made slippery.

Arrived at the upper ridge of the promontory, I saw a vast white plain.

I began to think of returning. It was eleven o'clock, and if Captain Nemo found the conditions favourable for observations, I wished to be present at the operation. We followed a narrow pathway running along the summit of the steep shore. At half-past eleven we had reached the place where we landed. The

boat had run aground bringing the Captain. I saw him standing on a block of basalt, his instruments near him, his eyes fixed on the northern horizon, near which the sun was then describing a lengthened curve. I took my place beside him, and waited without speaking. Noon arrived, and, as before, the sun did not appear. It was a fatality. Observations were still wanting. If not accomplished tomorrow, we must give up all idea of taking any. We were indeed exactly at the 20th of March. Tomorrow, the 21st, would be the equinox; the sun would disappear behind the horizon for six months, and with its disappearance the long polar night would begin. Since the September equinox it had emerged from the northern horizon, rising by lengthened spirals up to the 21st of December. At this period, the summer solstice of the southern regions, it had begun to descend; and tomorrow was to shed its last rays upon them. I communicated my fears and observations to Captain Nemo.

"You are right, M. Aronnax," said he; "if tomorrow I cannot take the latitude of the sun, I shall not be able to do it for six months. But precisely because chance has led me into these seas on the 21st of March, my bearings will be easy to take, if at twelve we can see the sun."

"Why, Captain?"

"Because then the orb of day describes such lengthened curves, that it is difficult to measure exactly its height above the horizon, and grave errors may be made with instruments."

"What will you do then?"

"I shall only use my chronometer," replied Captain Nemo. "If to-morrow, the 21st of March, the disc of the sun, allowing for refraction, is exactly cut by the northern horizon, it will show that I am at the south pole."

"Just so," said I. "But this statement is not mathematically correct, because the equinox does not necessarily begin at noon."

"Very likely, sir; but the error will not be a hundred yards, and we do not want more. Till tomorrow then!"

Captain Nemo returned on board. Conseil and I remained to survey the shore, observing and studying until five o'clock. Then I went to bed. The next day, the 21st of March, at five

in the morning, I mounted the platform. I found Captain Nemo there.

"The weather is lightening a little," said he. "I have some hope."

Breakfast over, we went on shore. The *Nautilus* had gone some miles further up in the night. It was a whole league from the coast, above which reared a sharp peak about five hundred yards high. The boat took with me Captain Nemo, two men of the crew, and the instruments, which consisted of a chronometer, a telescope and a barometer. While crossing, I saw numerous whales belonging to the three kinds peculiar to the southern seas; the whale, or the English "right whale," which has no dorsal fin; the "humpback," with reeved chest, and large whitish fins; and the fin-back, of a yellowish brown, the liveliest of all. This powerful creature is heard a long way off when he throws to a great height columns of air and vapour, which look like whirlwinds of smoke. These different mammals were disporting themselves in troops in the quiet waters; and I could see that this basin of the antarctic pole served as a place of refuge.

At nine we landed; the sky was brightening, the clouds were flying to the south, and the fog seemed to be leaving the cold surface of the waters. Captain Nemo went towards the peak, which he doubtless meant to be his observatory. It was a painful ascent over the sharp lava and the pumice stones, in an atmosphere often impregnated with a sulphurous smell from the smoking cracks. For a man unaccustomed to walk on land, the Captain climbed the steep slopes with an agility I never saw equalled, and which a hunter would have envied. We were two hours getting to the summit of this peak, which was half porphyry and half basalt. From thence we looked upon a vast sea, which, towards the north, distinctly traced its boundary line upon the sky. At our feet lay fields of dazzling whiteness. Over our heads a pale azure, free from fog. To the north the disc of the sun seemed like a ball of fire, already horned by the cutting of the horizon. From the bosom of the water rose sheaves of liquid jets by hundreds. In the distance lay the *Nautilus*. Behind us, to the south and east, an immense country, and a chaotic heap of rocks and ice, the limits of which were

not visible. On arriving at the summit, Captain Nemo carefully took the mean height of the barometer, for he would have to consider that in taking his observations. At a quarter to twelve, the sun, then seen only by refraction, looked like a golden disc shedding its last rays upon this deserted continent, and seas which never man had yet ploughed. Captain Nemo, furnished with a lenticular glass, which, by means of a mirror, corrected the refraction, watched the orb sinking below the horizon by degrees, following a lengthened diagonal. I held the chronometer. My heart beat fast. If the disappearance of the half-disc of the sun coincided with twelve o'clock on the chronometer, we were at the pole itself.

"Twelve!" I exclaimed.

"The South Pole!" replied Captain Nemo, in a grave voice, handing me the glass, which showed the orb cut in exactly equal parts by the horizon.

I looked at the last rays crowning the peak, and the shadows mounting by degrees up its slopes. At that moment Captain Nemo, resting with his hand on my shoulder, said—

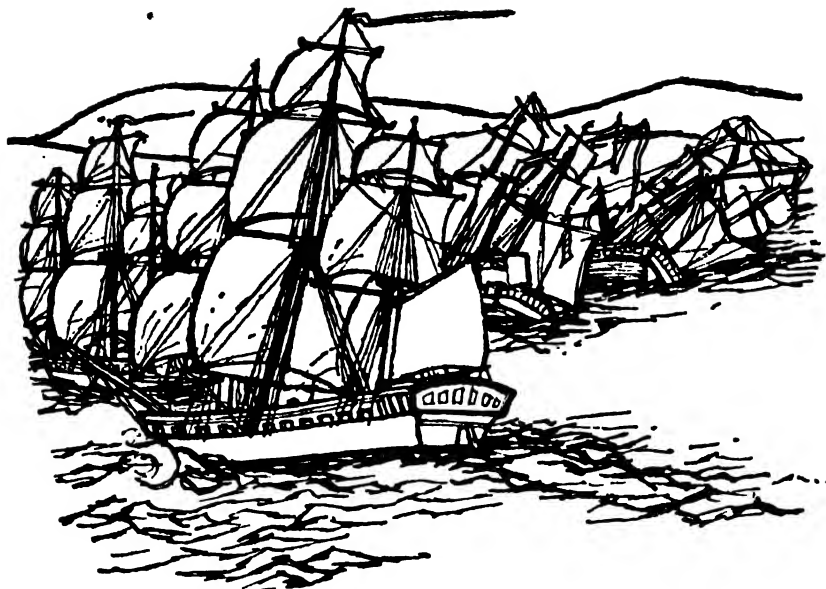
"I, Captain Nemo, on this 21st day of March 1868, have reached the south pole on the ninetieth degree; and I take possession of this part of the globe, equal to one-sixth of the known continents."

"In whose name, Captain?"

"In my own, sir!"

Saying which, Captain Nemo unfurled a black banner, bearing an N in gold quartered on its bunting. Then turning towards the orb of day, whose last rays lapped the horizon of the sea, he exclaimed—

"Adieu, sun! Disappear, thou radiant orb! rest beneath this open sea, and let a night of six months spread its shadows over my new domains!"



## *In the Basque Roads*

G. A. HENTY

LIEUTENANT EMBLETON, a retired naval officer, tells his son of his service under the dashing naval commander Lord Cochrane, who had an ill-starred career in the Royal Navy and later, in disgrace following a court-martial that reflected little credit on his superiors, went to South America to help the cause of freedom. Cochrane was in fact later vindicated, as Lieutenant Embleton hoped, and after his service abroad, which earned him considerable renown, returned to live in an England that tried to make amends to a gallant and sadly misjudged sailor. This story, which incidentally throws an interesting light on elections as held in the year of Trafalgar, is taken from *Cochrane the Dauntless*, which also relates the adventures of Lieutenant Embleton's son Stephen when serving under Cochrane in South American waters.

Lord Cochrane had not forgotten me, and on the day that he was appointed to the *Pallas* he wrote to me saying that he had applied for me as second lieutenant, and that Lord Melville had promised to appoint me. Two days later I got the official appointment with orders to join at once. I found Cochrane in a very bad temper. He said, "What do you think, Embleton, that confounded cruise of mine in the *Arab* has ruined me in the opinion of the sailors. Why, if I had been appointed to a hundred-gun ship on the day when we returned together after the loss of the *Speedy*, I could have got volunteers enough for her in twenty-four hours. Now the dismal tale told by the crew of the *Arab* of our exile in the North Sea, and the fear, no doubt, that I am going to be sent off to some similar station, has so frightened them that I have not had half a dozen men apply, and I actually shall have to impress a crew."

"I expect, sir," I said, "that when we get hold of a few prime seamen, and I tell them that they are as sure of prize-money with you as if it was already divided, they will soon spread the news, and we shall not be long before we fill up."

So it turned out; luckily, among the first haul that Cochrane made, there were two or three of the *Speedy's* old crew. I took them in hand, and told them that so far from being in disgrace any longer, Lord Cochrane had a commission to take a month's cruise off the Azores before joining the fleet, and that that job alone was likely to fill every man's pockets. In a very short time we had the pick of the best men in Plymouth, and sailed in the middle of January, 1805, for the Azores. Instead of making straight for the islands, Cochrane ran down the coast of Spain and then worked up towards the Azores, thereby putting us on the track of any Spanish vessels bound from the West Indies to Cadiz. A day or two later we captured a large ship bound from Havana laden with a valuable cargo. Having learned from the prisoners that the ship was part of a large convoy we proceeded on our course, and a week later captured another even more valuable prize, as she contained in addition to the usual cargo some diamonds and ingots of gold and silver.

Two days later we took another, the richest of the three, having on board a large quantity of dollars; and the next day caught a fine privateer with more dollars on board. These four

prizes were sent in to Plymouth. As we only had a month this brought the work to a close, and we returned to Plymouth. We had a serious adventure on the way back, for in heavy weather we fell in with three French line-of-battle ships. They at once made after us, and with half a gale and a heavy sea they gained on us fast. As we had taken out the dollars from the prizes and had them on board the *Pallas*, the thought of losing them was even more vexatious than the idea of seeing the inside of a French prison. The *Pallas* was a very crank vessel, and her lee main-deck guns were under water, and even the quarter-deck carronades were at times immersed. However, the Frenchmen came up so fast that it was necessary, at any cost, to crowd on more sail. Cochrane had all the hawsers brought up, and with these got up preventer stays, and then every sail was spread.

This drove her bows-under through the seas. Still they came up to us, but they were also plunging so heavily that they too were unable to fire a gun. Presently we had one on each side of us, with less than half a mile interval between us. The third was a quarter of a mile further away. The situation was a very unpleasant one, for now that they were up to us, they would be able to shorten sail a little and occasionally fire at us with their broadside guns. Cochrane gave orders for the whole crew to be ready to shorten sail when he gave the word, and that every sail should come down simultaneously. It was a critical movement, but it was well executed. Cochrane himself shouted the orders, and in a moment down came every sail. The helm at the same moment was put a-weather. Had it not been for the hawsers with which we had stayed the masts, everything must have gone out of her as we wore round, rolling in the trough of the sea. As soon as she was round, up went her sails again, and we went off on the opposite tack to that on which we had before been running.

The French were altogether unprepared for such a manœuvre in such a heavy gale as was now blowing, and it was a long time before they could shorten sail and get on the opposite tack, indeed they ran on some miles before they could do this, while we were rushing along at the rate of thirteen knots an hour in the opposite direction; so they were a very long distance away before they were fairly after us. By this time darkness was

coming on, and when morning broke they were altogether out of sight, and we continued our course to Plymouth. An election was on, and while we were lying two months in Plymouth Cochrane stood as candidate for Honiton, but was defeated. He refused to bribe, and his opponent therefore won hands down, as he paid the usual sum of five pounds for each vote. After the election was over, Cochrane sent ten guineas to each of the men who had voted for him, saying that he had sent it as a reward for their having refused to accept the bribes of his opponent.

The expenditure was considerable, but, as Cochrane calculated, it ensured his return at the next election whenever that might take place, as each voter naturally calculated that if he had paid ten guineas a vote after he was beaten, there was no saying what he would pay if he were returned. At the end of May we sailed in charge of a convoy for Quebec, and brought one back again. It was dull work, and we were heartily glad when on our return we were ordered to cruise off Boulogne and then to join the squadron of Admiral Thornborough, which was to operate on the French and Spanish coasts. There we captured a ship at anchor under the guns of a battery, and also a fast-sailing lugger, and then joined the squadron at Plymouth, and sailed thence on the 24th of March, 1806. We captured some fishing-boats, but let them go, and from information gained from the men brought off two prizes laden with wine, and during the week captured several other ships, and then rejoined the squadron, which we supplied with wine sufficient to last them for some considerable time.

Leaving the fleet again, we heard that some French corvettes were lying up the Garonne; and after dark we came to an anchor, and the boats, manned by the whole crew—except about forty men—under the command of the first lieutenant, rowed up the river to capture one of them, which was lying a few miles up under the protection of two batteries. About four o'clock in the morning we heard heavy firing. The boats had, after a smart fight, captured a corvette which mounted fourteen guns. No sooner had they taken possession than two other corvettes came up. The guns of the prize were turned upon them and they were beaten off, and the prize was brought

safely down the river. In the meantime our position had not been a pleasant one. Soon after daylight three strange craft were seen making for the mouth of the river. They were clearly enemies, and as we had only forty hands on board, things looked very blue.

"We must make them think that we are strong-handed," Cochrane said to me; and he ordered the men aloft to fasten up the furled sails with rope-yarn and to cast off the gaskets and other ropes. Then he waited until the enemy approached, while the men remained on the yards knife in hand. When he gave the word they cut the rope-yarns, and the sails all fell together. This naturally produced the impression upon the Frenchmen that we had a very strong crew, and directly the cloud of canvas fell they hauled their wind and made off along the shore. Every hand on board, officers and men, hauled at the sheets, and we were soon in chase. We gained rapidly upon them, divided the crew among the bow-guns, and opened fire. Scarcely had we fired half a dozen shots when the captain of the foremost vessel ran his ship ashore.

The shock brought down her masts, and the crew landed in her boats. We ran as close as we dared, and fired several broadsides into her to prevent her floating with the rising tide. The other two corvettes came back to assist their comrade, but when we sailed boldly towards them, firing our bow-guns again, the one nearest to us deliberately ran ashore, and was, like the first, dismasted. The third boat made for the river, but our superior sailing cut her off, whereupon she also ran herself ashore, and was abandoned by her crew. I don't know that I ever saw forty men laugh so much as did our fellows at seeing three strong corvettes thus deliberately run ashore and destroy themselves, when, if any one of the three had attacked us single handed, we could have made no real resistance. The prize captured by the boats now came down, and the *Pallas* rejoined the squadron. Admiral Thornborough wrote a very warm despatch as to the gallantry of the affair, but no notice was taken of it at the admiralty, and the first lieutenant did not receive the promotion that he deserved. After two or three other affairs we were ordered to sail into the Basque Roads to reconnoitre a French squadron lying there. This, after a brush with a French frigate

and three brigs, we succeeded in doing, and discovered that there were five men-of-war, two heavy frigates, three smaller frigates, and three brigs. A few days later we sailed inshore, and the boats landed and destroyed two of the French signal stations and carried the battery and spiked its guns.

A day or two afterwards we had a sharp fight in the Basque Roads. A frigate and three brigs came out to meet us. We disabled one of the brigs, drove the frigate on to a shoal, and were on the point of capturing it when two other frigates came out to her assistance, and as we had lost several spars when we ran aboard the first frigate we were obliged to make off. After this we returned to England. Another election was coming on, Cochrane stood again for Honiton, and was returned to parliament without spending a penny. On the 23rd of August he was appointed to the command of the *Impérieuse*, and the crew of the *Pallas* were turned over to her, and on the 29th of November we joined the fleet again. We took several prizes, and returned to Plymouth in February. While we were there another election came. As Honiton was sick of Lord Cochrane and Cochrane was sick of Honiton, he stood this time for Westminster, and was returned. He presently brought forward in the House of Commons a motion with reference to the abuses in the navy; the only result of which was that he was at once ordered to join the *Impérieuse*.

In September we sailed to join Lord Collingwood's fleet in the Mediterranean. I need not go through all the events of that cruise. We took a great many prizes, and had a good many actions with batteries. Spain broke with France, and we had a brisk time of it and gained an immense amount of credit, and should have gained a very large amount of prize-money had it not been for the rascality of the prize-court at Malta, which had, I believe, been instigated by someone in London to adopt as hostile an attitude as possible towards Lord Cochrane. The most important and exciting affair that we had was our defence of Fort Trinidad, close to the town of Rosas. Lord Cochrane's orders had been to assist the Spaniards against the French, and he had done a great deal that way by landing strong parties, who blew up roads, blocked communications, and rendered the passage of bodies of French troops difficult if not impossible.

When we arrived off Rosas the French had already invested the town. The marines of the *Excellent* had been holding Fort Trinidad; but had suffered severely from a battery erected by the French upon a hill commanding it. They were withdrawn on the arrival of the *Impérieuse*, and their place taken by our marines.

It was a rum place that fort. The side towards the sea sloped gradually but steeply, and two forts were placed one above another, like big steps. Above these stood a tall tower, very strongly built. The forts had no guns; but had they had them they could not have used them against the enemy's battery on the high cliff, for the tower stood in their way and so protected them from the French fire. We defended the place for a long time, even after the town of Rosas had itself fallen. Several attempts at assault were made, but all were repulsed. The last was the most serious. The enemy had made a breach at the foot of the tower, but to reach it they would have to scale the cliff on which it stood, by means of ladders. Cochrane prepared for the assault in a very curious way. Just below the breach was a sort of vault, some forty feet deep, under the tower. Cochrane knocked away a portion of the arched roof of this vault, so that on reaching the top of the breach the French would see a great gulf in front of them. With timbers and planks he erected a sort of slide from the breach down into this vault, and covered it with grease, so that those trying to descend would shoot down to the bottom and remain there prisoners until released.

When he had completed this he laid trains to blow up the magazines in case it was necessary to evacuate the fort. Being thus prepared, he waited for the assault. Commanded as the town was by the batteries on the cliff, nothing could be done to prevent their making this breach, and for the same reason there were no means of preventing the scaling parties placing their ladders and climbing up. Interior barricades were, however, formed, and when they made an attack before day-break we repulsed them with ease. Forty of the enemy who got on to the top of the breach were destroyed by our musketry fire as soon as they reached it; shells were dropped down upon those waiting below, hand-grenades thrown, and after suffering severe loss they drew off. The French erected fresh batteries,

and at last the place became absolutely untenable; so we took to the boats, blew up the castle, and got safely on board the *Impérieuse*. After capturing some more prizes and doing other service the *Impérieuse* returned to Plymouth, and Cochrane was appointed to go out and take the command of some fire-ships, and to attack the French fleet in the Basque Roads.

Admiral Gambier, who was in command of our fleet on that coast, was in strong opposition to the plan, and had denounced the effort as desperate; but the ministry were extremely unpopular, and they desired to strike a blow that would excite enthusiasm. They themselves did not believe in success, but offered Cochrane the command in order that, should it fail, the blame could be thrown wholly on his shoulders. He at first declined altogether to have anything to do with it, and drew up a memorandum showing the number of batteries that would have to be encountered, and the extreme improbability of their ever arriving near enough to the French squadron to do them any harm. His objections were overruled, and he was ordered to sail for the Basque Roads, where six transports prepared as fire-ships were to join him. This appointment caused, as was natural, very great dissatisfaction among the captains commanding the ships in Gambier's squadron. They were all senior to Cochrane, and regarded his appointment on such a service as being a slur, and indeed an insult on themselves personally, their anger however being excited rather against Lord Gambier than against Cochrane himself. The fleet, indeed, was in a state of general disorganization: approaching mutiny, at the inactivity in which they had been kept and at various measures that had been carried out by the admiral. As he might have had to wait for a long time before the fire-ships arrived from England, Cochrane obtained from Gambier several craft which he fitted up as fire-ships. The others, however, arrived from England, and Cochrane wanted to make the attack on the night they joined, before the French could gain any knowledge of the nature of the attempt that was going to be made against them. But Lord Gambier refused to consent, and the result was that the French did get notice of our intentions and were prepared.

In order to avoid the danger, the enemy's ten men-of-war

struck their top masts and got all their sails on deck, his four frigates alone remaining in sailing order. These were placed half a mile in front of the men-of-war, and lay in shelter of an immense boom, specially designed to arrest the approach of an enemy at night. In addition to the fire-ships, Cochrane had prepared two or three vessels as what he called explosion-ships. These were intended not so much to damage the enemy as to terrify them, and to prevent their sending boats to divert the course of the fire-ships. A solid foundation of logs had been first laid on the keel, so as to form an extremely solid floor and to give the explosion an upward tendency. On these were placed a large number of empty spirit and water casks set on end. Into these fifteen hundred barrels of powder were emptied; the space around them was filled in with timber and sand, so as to form a solid mass, and over the powder casks were laid several hundred shells and some three thousand hand-grenades.

The French deemed their position impregnable. Their men-of-war were ranged close together in two lines, and the frigates and guard-boats they considered would be sufficient to divert any fire-ships that might make their way round the boom. Half a gale was blowing on shore. Cochrane himself went in the explosion-ship that led the advance.

The night was dark, and when Cochrane reached what he thought was the vicinity of the advanced ships of the French he lit the fuse, and with the officer and four men with him took to the boat and rowed away. They made but little way against the wind and sea, and the fuse, instead of burning for fifteen minutes as intended, only burned half that time. This, however, was really the means of saving the lives of those on board the boat. She was nearly swamped by the effect of the explosion; but as its force, as intended, took place upwards, the shells and grenades exploded far overhead, scattering their contents over a wide area, and the boat itself lay inside the circle of destruction. We on board the *Impérieuse*, which was anchored three miles away, felt the shock as if the ship had struck heavily on a rock. For a moment the sky seemed a sheet of fire. Then came the crash of the exploding shells and the rattle of the grenades, and then a roar as the fragments and pieces of wreck fell into the sea.

The fire-ships were very badly handled. Many of them were lighted over four miles from the enemy, some were put on the wrong tack before they were left by the crews; and although there were upwards of twenty in number only four reached the enemy's position, and not one did any damage whatever. Nevertheless, the desired effect was produced—the explosion-vessel was alongside the boom when she blew up and completely shattered it. The enemy were so appalled by the explosion that, believing the fire-ships were equally formidable, they not only made no attempt to divert their course, but with one exception all the French ships cut their cables; and when morning dawned, the whole of their fleet except two ships were helplessly ashore. The tide had ebbcd, and they all lay over on their side, with their bottoms exposed to fire, and had Lord Gambier sent but two or three ships in to complete the work of destruction not one of the powerful French squadron would have escaped.

The forts had begun to open upon us, therefore we sailed away towards the fleet that was lying ten miles off, and on getting within signalling distance, Cochrane signalled that all the enemy's ships except two were on shore, and that the frigates alone could destroy them. Beyond acknowledging the signals no notice was taken, and it was not until eleven o'clock that the fleet got up anchor, and then, sailing in to within three miles and a half of the road, anchored again. But this time the tide had risen, and most of the enemy's ships were already afloat. Furious at seeing the result of this attack absolutely thrown away, Cochrane ordered the anchor to be weighed, and allowed his vessel to drift towards the enemy. He could not get up sail, as he knew that he should be at once recalled if he did so, he therefore drifted until but a short distance from the enemy. Then at half-past one he suddenly made sail and ran towards them, hoisting at the same time the signal "in want of assistance", and engaged three line-of-battle ships. On seeing this several ships were sent to our assistance, but before they came up, one of the men-of-war hauled down her colours and was taken possession by us. The ships that came up engaged and captured the two other French men-of-war, while another was deserted by her crew and set on fire.

The signal for our recall was now hoisted by the admiral,

and was obeyed by most of the other ships, a frigate and four brigs, however, taking upon themselves to remain with the *Impérieuse*. However, they were prevented from destroying the vessels that still lay at their mercy by another peremptory order of recall. That brought the service of the *Impérieuse* and my service to an end, and the service of Cochrane also. We were ordered back to England, and Lord Gambier's despatch as to the affair was so scandalously untrue that Cochrane denounced it in parliament. Gambier demanded a court-martial, and as he had the support of an utterly unscrupulous government, a scandalously partial judge, and false witnesses backed by forged charts, the result was a certainty. The public indignation was excited to the highest pitch by the shameless manner in which the trial was conducted, and although Cochrane's career in the service was ruined, he became perhaps the most popular character in the country.

He was afterwards imprisoned and expelled the house, and has suffered persecutions of all kinds. Westminster, however, remained faithful to him, and has returned him at every election, and he has never relaxed his strenuous efforts to obtain naval reforms and to vindicate his own character.



## *The Invincible Armada*

CHARLES KINGSLEY

SPAIN'S invincible Armada has invaded the English Channel, bound for the conquest of England, and the first of the alerted English ships, smaller, with few men and lighter armament, have hurried to engage and harry the heavier Spanish galleons. With the fight-hungry English sea-captains under Lord Howard sails Amyas Leigh in the *Vengeance*, with his Bideford crew. Amyas, a friend of Francis Drake, is keen to find Don Guzman de Soto, his mortal and personal enemy, among the Spaniards, and for him the battle becomes limited in aim when Drake informs him of the name of the galleon carrying the don, the *Santa Catharina*. However, Amyas learns that in such a hotly contested engagement fortune can be fickle even to the brave. How he finally settles his long outstanding account with Don Guzman is told in *Westward Ho!* from which this colourful narrative is taken.

Now began that great sea-fight which was to determine whether Popery and despotism, or Protestantism and freedom, were the law which God had appointed for the half of Europe, and the whole of future America. It is a twelve days' epic, worthy not of dull prose, but of the thunder-roll of Homer's verse: but having to tell it, I must do my best, rather using, where I can, the words of contemporary authors than my own.

"The Lord High Admiral of England, sending a pinnace before, called the *Defiance*, denounced war by discharging her ordnance; and presently approaching within musquet-shot, with much thundering out of his own ship, called the *Arkroyall* (*alias* the *Triumph*), first set upon the Admirall's, as he thought, of the Spaniards (but it was Alfonso de Leon's ship). Soon after, Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher played stoutly with their ordnance on the hindmost squadron, which was commanded by Recalde." The Spaniards soon discover the superior "nimbleness of the English ships"; and Recalde's squadron, finding that they are getting more than they give, in spite of his endeavours, hurry forward to join the rest of the fleet. Medina the Admiral, finding his ships scattering fast, gathers them into a half-moon; and the Armada tries to keep solemn way forward, like a stately herd of buffaloes, who march on across the prairie, disdaining to notice the wolves which snarl around their track. But in vain. These are no wolves, but cunning hunters swiftly horsed, and keenly armed, and who will "shamefully shuffle", (to use Drake's own expression) that vast herd from the Lizard to Portland, from Portland to Calais Roads; and who, even in this short two hours' fight, have made many a Spaniard question the boasted invincibleness of this Armada.

One of the four great galliasses is already riddled with shot, to the great disarrangement of her "pulpits, chapels," and friars therein assistant. The fleet has to close round her, or Drake and Hawkins will sink her; in effecting which manœuvre, the "principal galleon of Seville," in which are Pedro de Valdez and a host of blue-blooded Dons, runs foul of her neighbour, carries away her foremast, and is, in spite of Spanish chivalry, left to her fate. This does not look like victory, certainly. But in the meanwhile, if they have fared no better than this against

a third of the Plymouth fleet, how will they fare when those forty belated ships, which are already whitening the blue between them and the Mewstone, enter the scene to play their part?

So ends the first day; not an English ship, hardly a man, is hurt. It has destroyed for ever in English minds the prestige of boastful Spain. It has justified utterly the policy which the good Lord Howard had adopted by Raleigh's and Drake's advice, of keeping up a running fight, instead of "clapping ships together without consideration", in which case, says Raleigh, "he had been lost, if he had not been better advised than a great many malignant fools were, who found fault with his demeanour."

Be that as it may, so ends the first day, in which Amyas and the other Bideford ships have been right busy for two hours knocking holes in a huge galleon, which carries on her poop a maiden with a wheel, and bears the name of *Sta. Catharina*. She had a coat of arms on the flag at her sprit, probably those of the commandant of soldiers; but they were shot away early in the fight, so Amyas cannot tell whether they were De Soto's or not. Nevertheless, there is plenty of time for private revenge; and Amyas, called off at last by the Admiral's signal, goes to bed and sleeps soundly.

The next morning finds them off Torbay; and Amyas is hailed by a pinnace, bringing a letter from Drake, which (saving the spelling, which was somewhat arbitrary, like most men's in those days) ran somewhat thus—

DEAR LAD,

I have been wool-gathering all night after five great hulks, which the Pixies transfigured overnight into galleons, and this morning again into German merchantmen. I let them go with my blessing; and coming back, fell in (God be thanked!) with Valdez' great galleon; and in it good booty, which the Dons his fellows had left behind, like faithful and valiant comrades, and the Lord Howard had let slip past him, thinking her deserted by her crew. I have sent to Dartmouth a sight of noblemen and gentlemen, maybe a half hundred; and Valdez himself, who when I sent my pinnace

aboard must needs stand on his punctilios, and propound conditions. I answered him, I had no time to tell with him; if he would needs die, then I was the very man for him; if he would live, then, buena guerra. He sends again, boasting that he was Don Pedro Valdez, and that it stood not with his honour, and that of the Dons in his company. I replied, that for my part, I was Francis Drake, and my matches burning. Whereon he finds in my name salve for the wounds of his own, and comes aboard, kissing my fist, with Spanish lies of holding himself fortunate that he had fallen into the hands of fortunate Drake, and much more, which he might have kept to cool his porridge. But I have much news from him (for he is a leaky tub); and among others, this, that your Don Guzman is aboard of the *Sta. Catharina*, commandant of her soldiery, and has his arms flying at her sprit, beside *Sta. Catharina* at the poop, which is a maiden with a wheel, and is a lofty built ship of 3 tier of ordnance, from which God preserve you, and send you like luck with

Your deare Friend and Admirall,

F. DRAKE

She sails in the squadron of Recalde. The Armada was minded to smoke us out of Plymouth; and God's grace it was they tried not: but their orders from home are too strait, and so the slaves fight like a bull in a tether, no farther than their rope, finding thus the devil a hard master, as do most in the end. They cannot compass our quick handling and tacking, and take us for very witches. So far so good, and better to come. You and I know the length of their foot of old. Time and light will kill any hare, and they will find it a long way from Start to Dunkirk.

"The Admiral is in a gracious humour, Leigh, to have vouchsafed you so long a letter."

"*St. Catharine!* why, that was the galleon we hammered all yesterday!" said Amyas, stamping on the deck.

"Of course it was. Well, we shall find her again, doubt not. That cunning old Drake! how he has contrived to line his own pockets, even though he had to keep the whole fleet waiting for him."

"He has given the Lord High Admiral the don, at all events."

"Lord Howard is too high-hearted to stop and plunder, Papist though he is, Amyas."

Amyas answered by a growl, for he worshipped Drake, and was not too just to Papists.

The fleet did not find Lord Howard till nightfall; he and Lord Sheffield had been holding on steadfastly the whole night after the Spanish lanterns, with two ships only. At least there was no doubt now of the loyalty of English Roman Catholics, and, indeed, throughout the fight, the Howards showed (as if to wipe out the slurs which had been cast on their loyalty by fanatics) a desperate courage, which might have thrust less prudent men into destruction, but led them only to victory. Soon a large Spaniard drifts by, deserted and partly burnt. Some of the men are for leaving their place to board her; but Amyas stoutly refuses. He has "come out to fight, and not to plunder; so let the nearest ship to her have her luck without grudging." They pass on, and the men pull long faces when they see the galleon snapped up by their next neighbour, and towed off to Weymouth, where she proves to be the ship of Miguel d'Oquenda, the Vice-Admiral, which they saw last night, all but blown up by some desperate Netherland gunner, who, being "misused," was minded to pay off old scores on his tyrants.

And so ends the second day; while the Portland rises higher and clearer every hour. The next morning finds them off the island. Will they try Portsmouth, though they have spared Plymouth? The wind has shifted to the north, and blows clear and cool off the white-walled downs of Weymouth Bay. The Spaniards turn and face the English. They must mean to stand off and on until the wind shall change, and then to try for the Needles. At least, they shall have some work to do before they round Purbeck Isle.

The English go to the westward again: but it is only to return on the opposite tack; and now begins a series of manœuvres, each fleet trying to get the wind of the other; but the struggle does not last long, and ere noon the English fleet have slipped close-hauled between the Armada and the land, and are coming down upon them right before the wind.

And now begins a fight most fierce and fell. "And fight they did confusedly, and with variable fortunes; while, on the one hand, the English manfully rescued the ships of London, which were hemmed in by the Spaniards; and, on the other side, the Spaniards as stoutly delivered Recalde, being in danger." Never was heard such thundering of ordnance on both sides, which notwithstanding from the Spaniards flew for the most part over the English without harm. Only Cock, an Englishman (whom Prince claims, I hope rightfully, as a worthy of Devon), "died with honour in the midst of the enemies in a small ship of his. For the English ships, being far the lesser, charged the enemy with marvellous agility; and having discharged their broadsides, flew forth presently into the deep, and levelled their shot directly, without missing, at those great and unwieldy Spanish ships." "This was the most furious and bloody skirmish of all" (though ending only, it seems, in the capture of a great Venetian and some small craft), "in which the Lord Admiral fighting amidst his enemies' fleet, and seeing one of his captains afar off (Fenner by name, he who fought the seven Portugals at the Azores), cried, 'O George, what doest thou? Wilt thou now frustrate my hope and opinion conceived of thee? Wilt thou forsake me now?' With which words he being enflamed, approached, and did the part of a most valiant captain"; as, indeed, did all the rest.

Night falls upon the floating volcano; and the morning finds them far past Purbeck, with the white peak of Freshwater ahead; and pouring out past the Needles, ship after ship, to join the gallant chase. For now from all havens, in vessels fitted out at their own expense, flock the chivalry of England; the Lords Oxford, Northumberland, and Cumberland, Pallavicin, Brooke, Carew, Raleigh, and Blunt, and many another honourable name, "as to a set field, where immortal fame and honour was to be attained." Spain has staked her chivalry in that mighty cast; not a noble house of Arragon or Castile but has lent a brother or a son—and shall mourn the loss of one: and England's gentlemen will measure their strength once for all against the cavaliers of Spain. Lord Howard has sent forward light craft into Portsmouth for ammunition; but they will scarce return tonight, for the wind falls dead, and all the evening the

two fleets drift helpless with the tide, and shout idle defiance at each other with trumpet, fife, and drum.

The sun goes down upon a glassy sea, and rises on a glassy sea again. But what day is this? The twenty-fifth, St. James's day, sacred to the patron saint of Spain. Shall nothing be attempted in his honour by those whose forefathers have so often seen him with their bodily eyes, charging in their van upon his snow-white steed, and scattering Paynims with celestial lance? He might have sent them, certainly, a favouring breeze; perhaps he only means to try their faith; at least the galleys shall attack; and in their van three of the great galliasses (the fourth lies half-crippled among the fleet) thrash the sea to foam with three hundred oars apiece; and see, not St. James leading them to victory, but Lord Howard's *Triumph*, his brother's *Lion*, Southwell's *Elizabeth Jonas*, Lord Sheffield's *Bear*, Barker's *Victory*, and George Fenner's *Leicester*, towed stoutly out, to meet them with such salvoes of chain-shot, smashing oars, and cutting rigging, that had not the wind sprung up again toward noon, and the Spanish fleet come up to rescue them, they had shared the fate of Valdez and the Biscayan. And now the fight becomes general. Frobisher beats down the Spanish Admiral's mainmast; and, attacked himself by Mexia and Recalde, is rescued by Lord Howard; who, himself endangered in his turn, is rescued in his turn; "while after that day" (so sickened were they of the English gunnery), "no galliassie would adventure to fight."

And so, with variable fortune, the fight thunders on the livelong afternoon, beneath the virgin cliffs of Freshwater; while myriad scafowl rise screaming up from every ledge, and spot with their black wings the snow-white wall of chalk; and the lone shepherd hurries down the slopes above to peer over the dizzy edge, and forgets the wheatear fluttering in his snare while he gazes trembling upon glimpses of tall masts and gorgeous flags, piercing at times the league-broad veil of sulphur-smoke which welters far below.

So fares St. James's day, and the Armada, "gathering itself into a roundel," will fight no more, but make the best of its way to Calais, where perhaps the Guises' faction may have a French force ready to assist them, and then to Dunkirk, to

join with Parma and the great flotilla of the Netherlands.

So on, before "a fair Etesian gale," which follows clear and bright out of the south-south-west, glide forward the two great fleets, past Brighton Cliffs and Beachy Head, Hastings and Dungeness. Is it a battle or a triumph? For by sea Lord Howard, instead of fighting, is rewarding; and after Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Sheffield, Townsend, and Frobisher have received at his hands that knighthood, which was then more honourable than a peerage, old Admiral Hawkins kneels and rises up Sir John, and shaking his shoulders after the accolade, observes to the representative of majesty, that his "old woman will hardly know herself again, when folks call her My Lady."

And meanwhile the cliffs are lined with pikemen and musketeers, and by every countryman and groom who can bear arms, led by their squires and sheriffs, marching eastward as fast as their weapons let them, towards the Dover shore. And not with them alone. From many a mile inland come down women and children, and aged folk in wagons, to join their feeble shouts, and prayers which are not feeble, to that great cry of mingled faith and fear which ascends to the throne of God from the spectators of Britain's Salamis.

Let them pray on. The danger is not over yet, though Lord Howard has had news from Newhaven that the Guises will not stir against England, and Seymour and Winter have left their post of observation on the Flemish shores, to make up the number of the fleet to an hundred and forty sail—larger, slightly, than that of the Spanish fleet, but of not more than half the tonnage, or one third the number of men. The Spaniards are dispirited and battered, but unbroken still; and as they slide to their anchorage in Calais Roads on the Saturday evening of that most memorable week, all prudent men know well that England's hour is come, and that the bells which will call all Christendom to church upon the morrow morn, will be either the death-knell or the triumphal peal of the Reformed faith throughout the world.

A solemn day that Sabbath must have been in country and in town. And many a light-hearted coward, doubtless, who had scoffed (as many did) at the notion of the Armada's coming, because he dare not face the thought, gave himself up to abject

fear, "as he now plainly saw and heard that of which before he would not be persuaded." And many a brave man, too, as he knelt beside his wife and daughters, felt his heart sink to the very pavement, at the thought of what those beloved ones might be enduring a few short days hence, from a profligate and fanatical soldiery, or from the more deliberate fiendishness of the Inquisition. The massacre of St. Bartholomew, the fires of Smithfield, the immolation of the Moors, the extermination of the West Indians, the fantastic horrors of the Piedmontese persecution—these were the spectres, which, not as now, dim and distant through the mist of centuries, but recent, bleeding from still gaping wounds, flitted before the eyes of every Englishman, and filled his brain and heart with fire.

He knew full well the fate in store for him and his. One false step, and the unspeakable doom which, not two generations afterwards, befell the Lutherans of Magdeburg, would have befallen every town from London to Carlisle. All knew the hazard, as they prayed that day, and many a day before and after, throughout England and the Netherlands. And none knew it better than She who was the guiding spirit of that devoted land, and the especial mark of the invaders' fury; and who, by some Divine inspiration (as men then not unwisely held), devised herself the daring stroke which was to anticipate the coming blow.

But where is Amyas Leigh all this while? Day after day he has been seeking the *Sta. Catharina* in the thickest of the press, and cannot come at her, cannot even hear of her: one moment he dreads that she has sunk by night, and balked him of his prey; the next, that she has repaired her damages, and will escape him after all. He is moody, discontented, restless, even (for the first time in his life) peevish with his men. He can talk of nothing but Don Guzman; he can find no better employment, at every spare moment, than taking his sword out of the sheath, and handling it, fondling it, talking to it even, bidding it not to fail him in the day of vengeance. He has believed for years with Drake, Hawkins, Grenville and Raleigh, that he was called and sent into the world only to fight the Spaniard: and he is fighting him now, in such a cause, for such a stake, within such battle-lists, as he will never see again: and yet he is not content;

and while throughout that gallant fleet, whole crews are receiving the Communion side by side, and rising with cheerful faces to shake hands, and to rejoice that they are sharers in Britain's Salamis, Amyas turns away from the holy elements.

While the crew were receiving the Communion on deck, Amyas sat below in the cabin sharpening his sword, and after it, called for a boat and went on board Drake's ship to ask news of the *Sta. Catharina*, and listened scowling to the loud chants and tinkling bells, which came across the water from the Spanish fleet. At last, Drake was summoned by the Lord Admiral, and returned with a secret commission, which ought to bear fruit that night; and Amyas, who had gone with him, helped him till nightfall, and then returned to his own ship as Sir Amyas Leigh, Knight, to the joy and glory of every soul on board, except his moody self.

So there, the livelong summer Sabbath day, before the little high-walled town and the long range of yellow sandhills, lie those two mighty armaments, scowling at each other, hardly out of gun-shot. Messenger after messenger is hurrying towards Bruges to the Duke of Parma, for light craft which can follow these nimble English somewhat better than their own floating castles; and, above all, entreating him to put to sea at once with all his force. The duke is not with his forces at Dunkirk, but on the future field of Waterloo, paying his devotions to St. Mary of Halle in Hainault. He returns for answer; first, that his victual is not ready; next, that his Dutch sailors, who have been kept at their post for many a week at the sword's point, have run away like water; and thirdly, that over and above all, he cannot come, so "strangely provided of great ordnance and musketeers" are those five-and-thirty Dutch ships, in which round-sterned and stubborn-hearted heretics watch, like terriers at a rat's hole, the entrance of Nieuwport and Dunkirk. Having ensured the private patronage of St. Mary of Halle, he will return to-morrow to make experience of its effects: but only hear across the flats of Dixmude the thunder of the fleets, and at Dunkirk the open curses of his officers. For while he has been praying and nothing more, the English have been praying and something more; and all that is left for the Prince of Parma is, to hang a few purveyors, as peace-offerings to his sulking

army, and then "chafe," as Drake says of him, "like a bear robbed of her whelps."

For Lord Henry Seymour has brought Lord Howard a letter of command from Elizabeth's self; and Drake has been carrying it out so busily all that Sunday long, that by two o'clock on the Monday morning, eight fire-ships "besmeared with wild-fire, brimstone, pitch, and resin, and all their ordnance charged with bullets and with stones," are stealing down the wind straight for the Spanish fleet, guided by two valiant men of Devon, Young and Prowse. (Let their names live long in the land!) The ships are fired, the men of Devon steal back, and in a moment more, the heaven is red with glare from Dover Cliffs to Gravelines Tower; and weary-hearted Belgian boors far away inland, plundered and dragooned for many a hideous year, leap from their beds, and fancy (and not so far wrongly either) that the day of judgment is come at last, to end their woes, and hurl down vengeance on their tyrants.

And then breaks forth one of those disgraceful panics, which so often follow overweening presumption; and shrieks, oaths, prayers, and reproaches, make night hideous. There are those too on board who recollect well enough Jenebelli's fire-ships at Antwerp three years before, and the wreck which they made of Parma's bridge across the Scheldt. If these should be like them! And cutting all cables, hoisting any sails, the Invincible Armada goes lumbering wildly out to sea, every ship foul of her neighbour.

The largest of the four galliasses loses her rudder, and drifts helpless to and fro, hindering and confusing. The duke having (so the Spaniards say) weighed his anchor deliberately instead of leaving it behind him, runs in again after a while, and fires a signal for return: but his truant sheep are deaf to the shepherd's pipe, and swearing and praying by turns, he runs up Channel towards Gravelines, picking up stragglers on his way, who are struggling as they best can among the flats and shallows: but Drake and Fenner have arrived as soon as he. When Monday's sun rises on the quaint old castle and muddy dykes of Gravelines town, the thunder of the cannon recommences, and is not hushed till night. Drake can hang coolly enough in the rear to plunder when he thinks fit: but when

the battle needs it, none can fight more fiercely, among the foremost; and there is need now, if ever. That Armada must never be allowed to re-form. If it does, its left wing may yet keep the English at bay, while its right drives off the blockading Hollanders from Dunkirk port, and sets Parma and his flotilla free to join them, and to sail in doubled strength across to the mouth of Thames.

So Drake has weighed anchor, and away up Channel with all his squadron, the moment that he saw the Spanish fleet come up; and with him Fenner burning to redeem the honour which, indeed, he had never lost; and ere Fenton, Beeston, Crosse, Ryman, and Lord Southwell can join them, the Devon ships have been worrying the Spaniards for two full hours into confusion worse confounded.

But what is that heavy firing behind them? Alas for the great galliasse! She lies, like a huge stranded whale, upon the sands where now stands Calais pier: and Amyas Preston, the future hero of La Guayra, is pounding her into submission, while a fleet of hoys and drumblers look on and help, as jackals might the lion.

Soon, on the south-west horizon, loom up larger and larger two mighty ships, and behind them sail on sail. As they near a shout greets the *Triumph* and the *Bear*; and on and in the Lord High Admiral glides stately into the thickest of the fight.

True, we have still but some three-and-twenty ships which can cope at all with some ninety of the Spaniards: but we have dash, and daring, and the inspiration of utter need. Now, or never, must the mighty struggle be ended. We worried them off Portland; we must rend them in pieces now; and in rushes ship after ship, to smash her broadsides through and through the wooden castles, "sometimes not a pike's length asunder," and then out again to reload, and give place meanwhile to another. The smaller are fighting with all sails set; the few larger, who, once in, are careless about coming out again, fight with topsails loose, and their main and foreyards close down on deck, to prevent being boarded. The duke, Oquenda, and Recalde, having with much ado got clear of the shallows, bear the brunt of the fight to seaward; but in vain. The day goes against them more and more, as it runs on. Seymour and

Winter have battered the great *San Philip* into a wreck; her masts are gone by the board; Pimentelli in the *San Mathew* comes up to take the mastiffs off the fainting bull, and finds them fasten on him instead; but the Evangelist, though smaller, is stouter than the Deacon, and of all the shot poured into him, not twenty "lackt him thorough". His masts are tottering; but sink or strike he will not.

"Go ahead, and pound his tough hide, Leigh," roars Drake off the poop of his ship, while he hammers away at one of the great galliasses. "What right has he to keep us all waiting?"

Amyas slips in as best he can between Drake and Winter; as he passes he shouts—

"We are with you, sir!" and slipping round Winter's bows, he pours his broadside into those of the *San Mathew*, and then glides on to reload; but not to return. For, not a pistol shot to leeward, worried by three or four small craft, lies an immense galleon; and on her poop—can he believe his eyes for joy?—the maiden and the wheel which he has sought so long!

"There he is!" shouts Amyas, springing to the starboard side of the ship. The men, too, have already caught sight of that hated sir; a cheer of fury bursts from every throat.

"Steady, men!" says Amyas in a suppressed voice. "Not a shot! Reload, and be ready; I must speak with him first"; and silent as the grave, amid the infernal din, the *Vengeance* glides up to the Spaniard's quarter.

"Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto!" shouts Amyas from the mizzen rigging, loud and clear amid the roar.

He has not called in vain. Fearless and graceful, the tall, mail-clad figure of his foe leaps up upon the poop-railing, twenty feet above Amyas's head, and shouts through his vizor—

"At your service, sir! whosoever you may be."

A dozen muskets and arrows are levelled at him; but Amyas frowns them down. "No man strikes him but I. Spare him, if you kill every other soul on board. Don Guzman! I am Captain Sir Amyas Leigh; I proclaim you a traitor, and challenge you once more to single combat, when and where you will."

"You are welcome to come on board me, sir," answers the Spaniard in a clear, quiet tone; "bringing with you this answer,

that you lie in your throat"; and lingering a moment, out of bravado, to arrange his scarf, he steps slowly down again behind the bulwarks.

"Coward!" shouts Amyas at the top of his voice.

The Spaniard reappears instantly.

"For that word, sirrah, you hang at my yard-arm, if Saint Mary gives me grace."

"See that your halter be a silken one, then," laughed Amyas, "for I am just dubbed knight." And he stepped down as a storm of bullets rang through the rigging round his head; the Spaniards are not as punctilious as he.

"Fire!" His ordnance crash through the stern-works of the Spaniard; and then he sails onward, while her balls go humming harmlessly through his rigging.

Half an hour has passed of wild noise and fury; three times has the *Vengeance*, as dolphin might, sailed clean round and round the *Sta. Catharina*, pouting in broadside after broadside, till the guns are leaping to the deck-beams with their own heat, and the Spaniard's sides are slit and spotted in a hundred places. And yet, so high has been his fire in return, and so strong the deck defences of the *Vengeance*, that a few spars broken, and two or three men wounded by musketry, are all her loss. But still the Spaniard endures, magnificent as ever; it is the battle of the thresher and the whale; the end is certain, but the work is long.

"Can I help you, Captain Leigh?" asked Lord Henry Seymour, as he passes within oar's length of him, to attack a ship ahead. "The *San Mathew* has had his dinner, and is gone on to Medina to ask for a digestive to it."

"I thank your Lordship: but this is my private quarrel, of which I spoke. But if your Lordship could lend me powder——"

"Would that I could! But so, I fear, says every other gentleman in the fleet."

A puff of wind clears away the sulphureous veil for a moment; the sea is clear of ships towards the land; the Spanish fleet are moving again up Channel, Medina bringing up the rear; only some two miles to their right hand, the vast hull of the *San Philip* is drifting up the shore with the tide, and somewhat nearer the *San Mathew* is hard at work at her pumps. They

can see the white stream of water pouring down her side.

"Go in, my Lord, and have the pair," shouts Amyas.

"No, sir! Forward is a Seymour's cry. We will leave them to pay the Flushingers' expenses." And on went Lord Henry, and on shore went the *San Philip* at Ostend, to be plundered by the Flushingers; while the *San Mathew*, whose captain, "on a hault courage", had refused to save himself and his gentlemen on board Medina's ship, went blundering miserably into the hungry mouths of Captain Peter Vanderduess and four other valiant Dutchmen, who, like prudent men of Holland, contrived to keep the galleon afloat till they had emptied her, and then "hung up her banner in the great church of Leyden, being of such a length, that being fastened to the roof, it reached unto the very ground."

But in the meanwhile, long ere the sun had set, comes down the darkness of the thunderstorm, attracted, as to a volcano's mouth, by that vast mass of sulphur-smoke which cloaks the sea for many a mile; and heaven's artillery above makes answer to man's below. But still, through smoke and rain, Amyas clings to his prey. She too has seen the northward movement of the Spanish fleet, and sets her topsails; Amyas calls to the men to fire high, and cripple her rigging: but in vain: for three or four belated galleys, having forced their way at last over the shallows, come flashing and sputtering up to the combatants, and take his fire off the galleon. Amyas grinds his teeth, and would fain hustle into the thick of the press once more, in spite of the galley's beaks.

"Most heroical captain," says Cary, pulling a long face; "if we do, we are stove and sunk in five minutes; not to mention that Yco says he has not twenty rounds of great cartridge left."

So, surely and silent, the *Vengeance* sheers off, but keeps as near as she can to the little squadron, all through the night of rain and thunder which follows. Next morning the sun rises on a clear sky, with a strong west-north-west breeze, and all hearts are asking what the day will bring forth.

They are long past Dunkirk now; the German Ocean is opening before them. The Spaniards, sorely battered, and lessened in numbers, have, during the night, regained some

sort of order. The English hang on their skirts a mile or two behind. They have no ammunition, and must wait for more. To Amyas's great disgust, the *Sta. Catharina* has rejoined her fellows during the night.

"Never mind," says Cary; "she can neither dive nor fly, and as long as she is above water, we——What is the Admiral about?"

He is signalling Lord Henry Seymour and his squadron. Soon they tack, and come down the wind for the coast of Flanders. Parma must be blockaded still; and the Hollanders are likely to be too busy with their plunder to do it effectually. Suddenly there is a stir in the Spanish fleet. Medina and the rearmost ships turn upon the English. What can it mean? Will they offer battle once more? If so, it were best to get out of their way, for we have nothing wherewith to fight them. So the English lie close to the wind. They will let them pass, and return to their old tactic of following and harassing.

"Good-bye to Seymour," says Cary, "if he is caught between them and Parma's flotilla. They are going to Dunkirk."

"Impossible! They will not have water enough to reach his light craft. Here comes a big ship right upon us! Give him all you have left, lads; and if he will fight us, lay him alongside, and die boarding."

They gave him what they had, and hulled him with every shot; but his huge side stood silent as the grave. He had not wherewithal to return the compliment.

"As I live, he is cutting loose the foot of his mainsail! the villain means to run."

"There go the rest of them! Victoria!" shouted Cary, as one after another, every Spaniard set all the sail he could.

There was silence for a few minutes throughout the English fleet; and then cheer upon cheer of triumph rent the skies. It was over. The Spaniard had refused battle, and thinking only of safety, was pressing downward toward the Straits again. The Invincible Armada had cast away its name, and England was saved.

"But he will never get there, sir," said old Yeo, who had come upon deck to murmur his *Nunc Domine*, and gaze upon that sight beyond all human faith and hope: "Never, never

will he weather the Flanders shore, against such a breeze as is coming up. Look to the eye of the wind, sir, and see how the Lord is fighting for His people!"

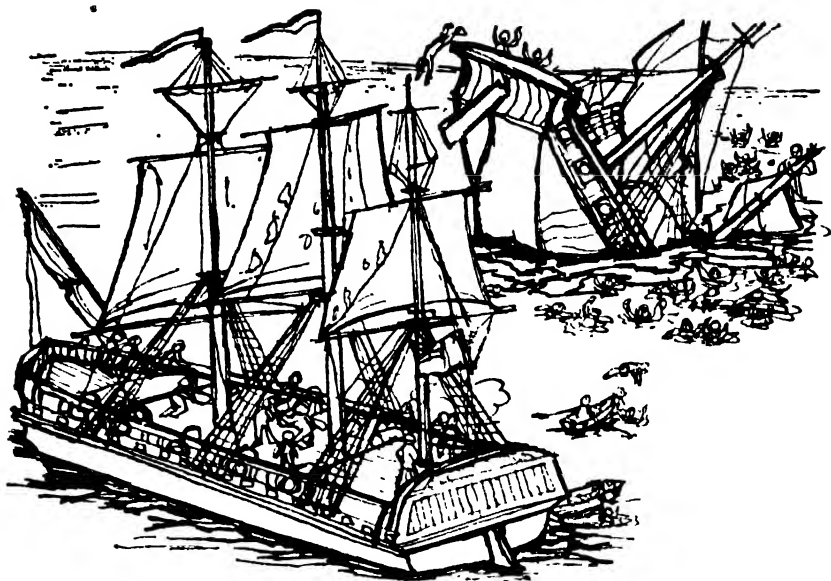
Yes, down it came, fresher and stiffer every minute out of the grey north-west, as it does so often after a thunderstorm; and the sea began to rise high and white under the "Claro Aquilone," till the Spaniards were fain to take in all spare canvas, and lie-to as best they could; while the English fleet, lying-to also, awaited an event which was in God's hands and not in theirs.

"They will be all ashore on Zealand before the afternoon," murmured Amyas.

The Spaniards neared and neared the fatal dunes, which fringed the shore for many a dreary mile; when, behold, the wind began to fall as rapidly as it had risen.

But the south-wester recovered the mastery of the skies, and Spaniard and English were moving away; this time northward. Whither now? To Scotland? Amyas knew not, and cared not.

The Armada was defeated, and England saved.



## *A Slaver Shows Fight*

MICHAEL SCOTT

TOM CRINGLE of the *Firebrand* is given command of the schooner *Wave*, and ordered to "cruise in the great Cuba channel for the prevention of piracy and the suppression of the slave trade carried on between the island of Cuba and the coast of Africa." He has with him three West Indian friends—Pepperpot Wagtail, a Jamaica Creole, Paul Gelid, a native of the Bahamas, and Aaron Bang. The crew have equally colourful names, such as Timothy Tiltackle, Jigmaree, and Handlead. The cruise is a light-hearted affair until a sail is sighted, and then the *Wave* goes into action, joined by her young captain's friends. This is one of the many adventures that befall the story's narrator in *Tom Cringle's Log*.

As the evening fell, the breeze freshened; and during the night it blew strong, so that from the time we bore up, and parted

company with the *Firebrand*, until day-dawn next morning, we had run 130 miles or thereby to the northward and westward, and were then on the edge of the Great Bahama Bank. The breeze now failed us, and we lay roasting in the sun until midday, the current sweeping us to the northward, and still farther on to the bank, until the water shoaled to three fathoms. At this time the sun was blazing fiercely right overhead; and from the shallowness of the water, there was not the smallest swell, or undulation of the surface. The sea, as far as the eye could reach, was a sparkling light green, from the snow-white sand at the bottom, as if a level desert had been suddenly submersed under a few feet of crystal clear water, which formed a cheery spectacle, when compared with the customary leaden, or dark blue colour of the rolling fathomless sea. It was now dead calm—"Fishing lines there—Idlers, fishing lines," said I; and in a minute there were forty of them down over the side.

In Europe, fish in their shapes partake of the sedate character of the people who inhabit the coasts of the seas or rivers in which they swim—at least I think so. The salmon, the trout, the cod, and all the other tribes of the finny people, are reputable in their shapes, and altogether respectable-looking creatures. But within the tropics, Dame Nature plays strange vagaries; and here, on the Great Bahama Bank, every new customer, as he floundered in on deck—no joke to him, poor fellow—elicited shouts of laughter from the crew. They were in no respect shaped like fish of our cold climate—some were all head—others all tail—some, so far as shape went, had their heads where, with submission, I conceived their tails should have been; and then the colours, the intense brilliancy of the scales of these monstrous-looking animals. We hooked up a lot of bonitos, 10lbs. a-piece, at the least.

At dinner our Creole friend was very entertaining. Bang drew him out, and had him to talk on all his favourite topics, in a most amusing manner.

The time wore on, and it might have been half-past seven when we went on deck.

It was a very dark night—Tailtackle had the watch. "Any thing in sight, Mr. Tailtackle?"

"Why, no, sir; but I have just asked your steward for your night-glass, as, once or twice—but it is so thick—Pray, sir, how far are we off the Hole in the Wall?"

"Why, sixty miles at the least."

The Hole in the Wall is a very remarkable rock in the Crooked Island Passage, greatly resembling, as the name betokens, a wall breached by the sea, or by battering cannon, which rises abruptly out of the water, to a height of forty feet.

"Then," quoth Tailtackle sharply, "there must be a sail close aboard of us, to windward there."

"Where?" said I. "Quick, send for my night-glass."

"I have it here in my hand, sir."

"Let me see"—and I peered through it until my eyes ached again. I could see nothing, and resumed my walk on the quarterdeck. Tailtackle, in the meantime, continued to look through the telescope, and as I turned from aft to walk forward, a few minutes after this—"Why, sir," said he, "it clears a bit, and I see the object that has puzzled me again."

"Eh? give me the glass"—in a second I caught it. "By Jupiter, you say true, Tailtackle! beat to quarters—quick—clear away the long gun forward there!"

All was bustle for a minute. I kept my eye on the object, but I could not make out more, than that it was a strange sail; I could neither judge of her size nor her rig, from the distance, and the extreme darkness of the night. At length I handed the glass to Tailtackle again. We were at this time standing in towards the Cuba shore, with a fine breeze, and going along seven knots, as near as could be.

The long gun was slewed round—both carronades were run out, all three being loaded, double-shotted, and carefully primed—the whole crew, with our black supernumeraries, being at quarters.

"I see her quite distinct now, sir," sung out Timotheus.

"Well, what looks she like?"

"A large brig, sir, by the wind on the same tack—you can see her now without the glass—there—with the naked eye."

I looked, and certainly fancied I saw some towering object rising high and dark to windward, like some mighty spectre walking the deep, but I could discern nothing more.

"She is a large vessel, sure enough, sir," said Timothy once more—"now she is hauling up her courses, sir—she takes in topgallant sails—why, she is bearing up across our bows, sir—mind she don't rake us."

"The deuce!" said I. I now saw the chase very distinctly bear up. "Put the helm up—keep her away a bit—steady—that will do—fire a shot across her bows, Mr. Taitackle—and, Mr. Reefpoint, shew the private signal." The gun was fired, and the lights shewn, but our spectral friend was all darkness and silence. "Mr. Scarfemwell," said I to the carpenter, "stand by the long gun. Taitackle, I don't like that chap—open the magazine." By this time the strange sail was on our quarter—we shortened sail, while he, finding that his manoeuvre of crossing our bows had been foiled by our bearing up also, got the foretack on board again, and set his topgallant sails, all very cleverly. He was not far out of pistol-shot. Taitackle, in his shirt and trousers, and felt shoes, now stuck his head up the main hatchway.

"I would recommend your getting the hatches on, sir—that fellow is not honest, sir, take my word for it."

"Never mind, Mr. Taitackle, never mind. Forward, there; Mr. Jigmaree, slap a round shot into him, since he won't speak, or heave to—right between his masts, do you hear—are you ready?"

"All ready, sir."

"Fire." The gun was fired, and simultaneous<sup>ly</sup>; we heard a crash on board the strange sail, followed by a piercing yell, similar to what the negroes raise over a dead comrade, and then a long melancholy howl.

"A slaver, and the shot has told, sir," said Mr. Handlead, the master.

The brig once more shortened sail; and the instant that the foresail rose, he let fly his bow gun at us—then another, another, and another.

"Nine guns of a side, as I am a sinner," quoth Jigmaree; and three of the shot struck us, mortally wounded one poor fellow, and damaged poor little Reefy by a splinter in the side.

"Stand by, men—take good aim—fire"—and we again let drive the long gun and carronade; but our friend was too

quick for us, for by this time he had once more hauled his wind, and made sail as close to it as he could stagger. We crowded everything in chase, but he had the heels of us, and in an hour he was once more nearly out of sight in the dark night, right to windward.

"Keep at him, Mr. Jigmaree;" and as I feared he was running us in under the land, I dived to consult the chart. There, in the cabin, I found Wagtail, Gelid, and Bang, sitting smoking on each side of the small table, with some brandy and water before them.

"Ah," quoth Gelid, "ah! fighting a little? Not pleasant in the evening, certainly."

One of the seamen, with another following him, brought down on his back the poor fellow who had been wounded, and laid his bloody load on the table. To those who are unacquainted with these matters, it may be right to say, that the captain's cabin, in a small vessel like the *Wave*, is often in an emergency used as a cockpit—and so it was in the present instance.

"Beg pardon, captain and gentlemen," said the surgeon, "but I must, I fear, perform an ugly operation on this poor fellow. I fancy you had better go on deck, gentlemen."

Now I had an opportunity to see of what sterling metal my friends were at bottom made. Mr. Bang in a twinkling had his coat off.

"Captain," said the poor fellow, while Bang supported him in his arms—"I shall do yet, sir; indeed I have no great pain."

All this time the surgeon was cutting off his trousers, and then, to be sure, a terrible spectacle presented itself. The knee-bone, was smashed to pieces. The doctor gave the poor fellow a large dose of laudanum in a glass of brandy, and then proceeded to amputate the limb, high up on the thigh. Bang stood the knife part of it very steadily, but the instant the saw rasped against the shattered bone he shuddered.

"I am going, Cringle—can't stand that—sick as a dog"—and he was so faint that I had to relieve him in supporting the poor fellow. Wagtail had also to go on deck, but Paul Gelid remained firm as a rock. The limb was cut off, the arteries taken up very cleverly.

Stern duty now called me on deck. The night was still very dark, and I could see nothing of the chase, but I made all the sail I could in the direction which I calculated she would steer, trusting that, before morning, we might get another glimpse of her.

The tedious night at length wore away, and the gray dawn found me sound asleep, leaning out at the gangway. They had scarcely begun to wash down the decks, when we discerned our friend of the preceding night, about four miles to windward, close hauled on the same tack, apparently running in for the Cuba shore, as fast as canvas would carry him. If this was his object, we had proved too quick for him, as by casting off stays, and slacking shrouds, and, in every way we could think of, loosening the rigid trim of the little vessel, we had in a great measure recovered her sailing; so when he found he was cut off from the land, he resolutely bore up, took in his topgallant-sails, hauled up his courses, fired a gun, and hoisted his large Spanish ensign, all in regular man-of-war fashion. By this time it was broad daylight, and Wagtail, Gelid and Bang, were all three on deck, performing their morning ablutions.

I expected the breeze would have freshened as the day broke, but I was disappointed; it fell, towards six o'clock, nearly calm. Come, thought I, we may as well go to breakfast; and my guests and I forthwith set down to our morning meal. Soon after, the wind died away altogether—and "out sweeps" was the word; but I soon saw we had no chance with the chase at this game, and as to attacking him with the boats, it was entirely out of the question; neither could I, in the prospect of a battle, afford to murder the people, by pulling all day under a roasting sun, against one who could man his sweeps with relays of slaves, without one of his crew putting a finger to them; so I reluctantly laid them in, and there I stood looking at him the whole forenoon, as he gradually drew ahead of us. At length I piped to dinner, and the men having finished theirs, were again on deck; but the calm still continued; and seeing no chance of it freshening, about four in the afternoon we sat down to ours in the cabin. There was little said; my friends, although brave and resolute men, were naturally happy to see the brig creeping away from us, as fighting could only

bring them danger; and my own feelings were of that mixed quality, that while I determined to do all I could to bring him to action, it would not have broken my heart had he escaped. We had scarcely finished dinner, however, when the rushing of the water past the run of the little vessel, and the steadiness with which she skimmed along, shewed that the light air had freshened.

Presently Taitackle came down. "The breeze has set down, sir; the strange sail has got it strong to windward, and brings it along with him cheerily."

"Beat to quarters, then, Taitackle; all hands stand by to shorten sail. How is she standing?"

"Right down for us, sir."

I went on deck, and there was the Guineaman about two miles to windward, evidently cleared for action, with her decks crowded with men, bowling along steadily under her single-reefed topsails.

I saw all clear. Wagtail and Gelid had followed me on deck, and were now busy with their black servants inspecting muskets. But Bang still remained in the cabin. I went down. He was gobbling his last plantain, and forking up along with it most respectable slices of cheese, when I entered.

I had seen before I left the deck that an action was now unavoidable, and judging from the disparity of force, I had my own doubts as to the issue. I need scarcely say that I was greatly excited. It was my first command: My future standing in the service depended on my conduct *now*—and, God help me, I was all this while a mere lad, not more than twenty-one years old. A strange indescribable feeling had come over me, and an irresistible desire to disburden my mind to the excellent man before me. I sat down.

"Hey day," quoth Bang, as he laid down his coffee-cup; "why, Tom, what ails you? You look deuced pale, my boy."

"Up all night, sir, and bothered all day," said I; "wearied enough, I can tell you."

I felt a strong tremor pervade my whole frame at this moment; and I was impelled to speak by some unknown impulse, which I could not account for, nor analyse.

"Mr. Bang, you are the only friend whom I could count

on in these countries; you know all about me and mine, and, I believe, would willingly do a kind action to my father's son."

"What are you at, Tom, my dear boy? come to the point, man."

"I will. I am distressed beyond measure at having led you and your excellent friends, Wagtail and Gold, into this danger; but I could not help it, and I have satisfied my conscience on that point; so I have only to entreat that you will stay below, and not unnecessarily expose yourselves. And if I should fall,—may I take this liberty, my dear sir," and I involuntarily took his hand—"if I should fall, and *I doubt if I shall ever see the sun set again*, as we are fearfully overmatched——"

Bang struck in—

"Why, if our friend be too big—why not be off then? Pull foot, man, eh?—Havana under your lee?"

"A thousand reasons against it, my dear sir. I am a young man and a young officer, my character is to *make* in the service—No, no, it is impossible—an older and more tried hand might have bore up, but I must fight it out. If any stray shot carries me off, my dear sir, will you take"—a choking lump rose in my throat, and I could not proceed for a second.

"Don't mention it—my good boy—don't mention it; neither of us, as the old general said, will fight a bit the worse."

I looked at him. "Do you then mean to fight?" said I.

"To be sure I do—why not? I have no wife," he did not say he had no children—"Fight? To be sure I do.

"Another gun, sir," said Tailtackle, through the open skylight. Now all was bustle, and we hastened on deck. Our antagonist was a large brig, three hundred tons at the least, a long low vessel, painted black, out and in, and her sides round as an apple, with immensely square yards. She was apparently full of men. The sun was getting low, and she was coming down fast on us, on the verge of the dark blue water of the sea-breeze. I could make out ten ports and nine guns of a side. I inwardly prayed they might not be long ones, but I was not a little startled to see through the glass that there were crowds of naked negroes at quarters, and on the forecastle and poop. That she was a contraband Guineaman, I had

already made up my mind to believe; and that she had some fifty hands of a crew, I also considered likely; but that her captain should have resorted to such a perilous measure, perilous to themselves as well as to us, as arming the captive slaves, was quite unexpected, and not a little alarming, as it evinced his determination to make the most desperate resistance.

Tailtackle was standing beside me at this time, with his jacket off, his cutlass girded on his thigh, and the belt drawn very tight. All the rest of the crew were armed in a similar fashion; the small-arm-men with muskets in their hands, and the rest at quarters at the guns; while the pikes were cast loose from the spars round which they had been stopped, with tubs of wadding, and boxes of grape, all ready ranged, and every thing clear for action.

"Mr. Tailtackle," said I, "you are gunner here, and should be in the magazine. Cast off that cutlass; it is not your province to lead the boarders." The poor fellow blushed, having, in the excitement of the moment, forgotten that he was anything more than captain of the *Firebrand's* maintop.

The slaver was now within musket-shot, when he put his helm to port, with the view of passing under our stern. To prevent being raked, we had to luff up sharp in the wind, and fire a broadside. I noticed the while splinters glance from his black wales; and once more the same sharp yell rung in our ears, followed by the long melancholy howl, already described.

"We have pinned some of the poor blacks again," said Tailtackle, who still lingered on the deck; small space for remark, for the slaver again fired his broadside at us, with the same cool precision as before.

"Down with the helm, and let her come round," said I; "that will do—master, run across his stern—out sweeps forward, and keep her there—get the other carronade over to leeward—that is it—now, blaze away while he is becalmed—fire, small-arm men, and take good aim."

We were now right across his stern, with the spanker boom within ten yards of us; and although he worked his two stern chasers with great determination, and poured whole showers of musketry from his rigging, and poop, and cabin-windows,

yet, from the cleverness with which our sweeps were pulled, and the accuracy with which we were kept in our position, right athwart his stern, our fire, both from the cannon and musketry, the former loaded with round and grape, was telling, I could see, with fearful effect.

Crash—"There, my lads, down goes his main-topmast—pepper him well, while they are blinded and confused among the wreck. Fire away—there goes the peak, shot away cleverly, close by the throat. Don't cease firing, although his flag be down—it was none of his doing. There, my lads, there he has it again; you have shot away the weather fore-topsail sheet, and he cannot get from under you."

Two men at this moment lay out on his larboard fore-yard-arm, apparently with the intention of splicing the sheet, and getting the clew of the fore-topsail once more down to the yard; if they had succeeded in this, the vessel would again have fetched way, and drawn out from under our fire. Mr. Bang and Paul Gelid had all this time been firing with murderous precision, from where they had ensconced themselves under the shelter of the larboard bulwark, close to the taffarel, with their three black servants in the cabin, loading the six muskets, and little Wagtail, who was no great shot, sitting on the deck, handing them up and down.

"Now, Mr. Bang," cried I, "for the love of Heaven,"—and may heaven forgive me for the ill-placed exclamation—"mark these two men—down with them!"

Bang turned towards me with all the coolness in the world—"What, those chaps on the end of the long stick?"

"Yes—yes," (I here spoke of the larboard fore-yardarm,) "yes, down with them."

He lifted his piece as steadily as if he had really been duck-shooting.

"I say, Gelid, my lad, take you the innermost."

"Ah!" quoth Paul. They fired—and down dropped both men, and squattered for a moment in the water, like wounded waterfowl, and then sank for ever.

"Now, master," shouted I, "put the helm up and lay him alongside—there—stand by with the grapplings—one round the backstay—the other through the chainplate there—so—

you have it." As we ranged under his counter—"Mainchains are your chance, men—boarders, follow me." And in the enthusiasm of the moment, I jumped into the slaver's main channel, followed by twenty-eight men. We were in the act of getting over the netting when the enemy rallied and fired a volley of small arms, which sent four out of the twenty-eight to their account, and wounded three more. We gained the quarterdeck, where the Spanish captain, and about forty of his crew, shewed a determined front, cutlass and pistol in hand—we charged them—they stood their ground. Tiltackle (who, the moment he heard the boarders called, had jumped out of the magazine, and followed me) at a blow clove the Spanish captain to the chine; the lieutenant, or second in command, was my bird, and I had disabled him by a sabre cut on the sword-arm, when he drew his pistol, and shot me through the left shoulder. I felt no pain, but a sharp pinch, and then a cold sensation, as if water had been poured down my neck.

Jigmaree was close by me with a boarding-pike, and our fellows were fighting with all the gallantry inherent in British sailors. For a moment the battle was poised in equal scales. At length our antagonist gave way, when about fifteen of the slaves, naked barbarians, who had been ranged with muskets in their hands on the forecastle, suddenly jumped down into the waist with a yell, and came to the rescue of the Spanish part of the crew.

I thought we were lost. Our people, all but Tiltackle, poor Handlead, and Jigmaree, held back. The Spaniards rallied, and fought with renewed courage, and it was now, not for glory, but for dear life, as all retreat was cut off by the parting of the grapplings and warps, that had lashed the schooner alongside of the slaver, for the *Wave* had by this time forged ahead, and lay across the brig's bows, in place of being on our quarter, with her fore-mast jammed against the slaver's bowsprit, whose spritsail-yard crossed our deck between the masts. We could not therefore retreat to our own vessel if we had wished it, as the Spaniards had possession of the waist and forecastle; all at once, however, a discharge of round and grape crashed through the bridleport of the brig, and swept off three

of the black auxiliaries before mentioned, and wounded as many more.

I hailed them to surrender.

"Zounds," cried Jigmaree, "there's the clink of hammers; they are knocking off the fetters of the slaves."

"If you let the blacks loose," I sung out in Spanish, "by the Heaven above us, I will blow you up, although I should go with you! Hold your hands, Spaniards! Mind what you do, madmen!"

"On with the hatches, men," shouted Tailtackle.

They had been thrown overboard, or put out of the way, they could nowhere be seen. The firing from below continued.

"Cast loose that carronade there; clap in a canister of grape—so—now run it forward, and fire down the hatchway." It was done, and taking effect amongst the pent-up slaves, such a yell arose—O God! O God!--I never can forget it. Still the maniacs continued firing up the hatchway.

"Load and fire again." My people were now furious, and fought more like incarnate fiends broke loose from hell than human beings.

"Run the gun up to the hatchway once more." They ran the carronade so furiously forward, that the coaming, or ledge was split off, and down went the gun, carriage and all, with a crash into the hold. Presently smoke appeared rising up the fore-hatchway.

"They have set fire to the brig; overboard—regain the schooner, or we shall all be blown into the air like peels of onions!" sung out little Jigmaree.

But where was the *Wave*? She had broke away, and was now a cable's length ahead, apparently fast leaving us.

"Up, and let fall the foresail, men—down with the foretack—cheerily now—get way on the brig, and overhaul the *Wave* promptly, or we are lost," cried I. It was done with all the coolness of desperate men. I took the helm, and presently we were once more alongside of our own vessel. Time we were so, for about one hundred and fifty of the slaves, whose shackles had been knocked off, now scrambled up the fore-hatchway, and we had only time to jump overboard, when they made a rush aft; and no doubt, exhausted as we were, they would

have massacred us on the spot, frantic and furious as they had become from the murderous fire of grape that had been directed down the hatchway.

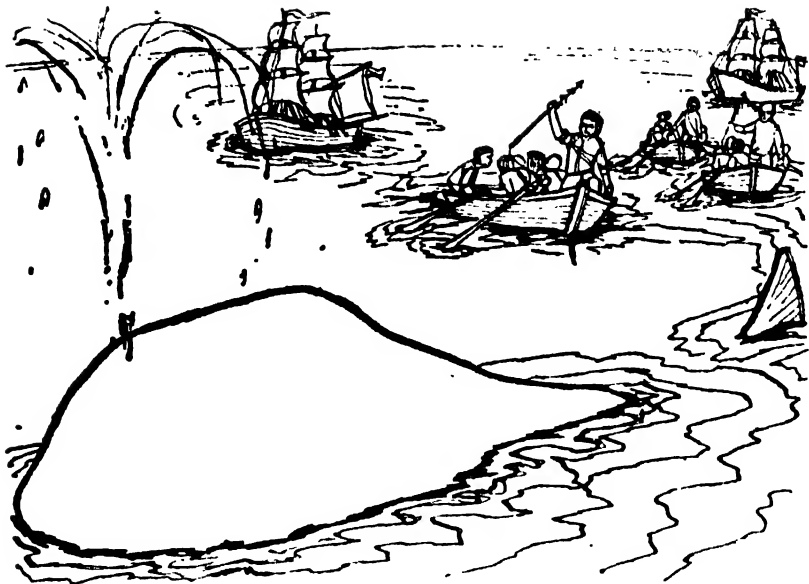
But the fire was quicker than they. The smouldering smoke, that was rising like a pillar of cloud from the fore-hatchway, was now streaked with tongues of red flame, which, licking the masts and spars, ran up and caught the sails and rigging. In an instant, the fire spread to every part of the gear aloft, while the other element, the sea, was also striving for the mastery in the destruction of the doomed vessel; for our shot, or the fall of the carronade into the hold, had started some of the bottom planks, and she was fast settling down by the head. We could hear the water rushing in like a millstream. The fire increased—her guns went off as they became heated—she gave a sudden heel—and while five hundred human beings, pent up in her noisome hold, split the heavens with their piercing death-yells, down she went with a heavy lurch, head foremost, right in the wake of the setting sun, whose level rays made the thick dun wreaths that burst from her as she disappeared, glow with the hue of the amethyst; and while the whirling clouds, gilded by his dying radiance, curled up into the blue sky, in rolling masses, growing thinner and thinner, until they vanished away, even like the wreck whereout they arose—and the circling eddies, created by her sinking, no longer sparkled and flashed in the red light—and the stilled waters where she had gone down, as if oil had been cast on them, were spread out like polished silver, shining like a mirror, while all around was dark blue ripple—a puff of fat black smoke, denser than any we had yet seen, suddenly emerged, with a loud gurgling noise, from out the deep bosom of the calmed sea, and rose like a balloon, rolling slowly upwards, until it reached a little way over our mastheads, where it melted and spread out into a dark pall, that overhung the scene of death, as if the incense of such a horrible and polluted sacrifice could not ascend into the pure heaven, but had been again crushed back upon our devoted heads, as a palpable manifestation of the wrath of *Him* who hath said—"Thou shalt not kill."

For a few moments all was silent as the grave, and I felt as

if the air had become too thick for breathing, while I looked up like another Cain.

Presently, about one hundred and fifty of the slaves, *men, women, and children*, who had been drawn down by the vortex, rose amidst numberless pieces of smoking wreck, to the surface of the sea; the strongest yelling like fiends. But we could not perceive one single individual of her white crew; like desperate men, they had all gone down with the brig. We picked up about one half of the miserable Africans.

Soon all was quiet; a wounded black here and there was shrieking and struggling for a moment before he sank into his watery grave; a few pieces of wreck were floating and sparkling on the surface of the deep in the blood-red sunbeams, which streamed in a flood of glorious light on the bloody deck, shattered hull, and torn sails and rigging of the *Wave*, and on the dead bodies and mangled limbs of those who had fallen; while some heavy scattering drops of rain fell sparkling from a passing cloud, as if Nature had wept in pity over the dismal scene. I said something—ill and hastily. Aaron was close beside me, sitting on a carronade slide, while the surgeon was dressing a pike wound in his neck. He looked up solemnly in my face, and then pointed to the blessed luminary, that was now sinking in the sea, and blazing up into the resplendent heavens—“Cringe, for shame—for shame—your impatience is blasphemous. Remember this morning—and thank *Him*”—here he looked up and crossed himself—“thank *Him* who, while he has called poor Mr. Handlead, and so many brave fellows, to their last awful reckoning, has mercifully brought *us* to the end of this fearful day—oh, thank *Him*, Tom, *that you have seen the sun set once more!*”



## *The Yellow Whale*

HERMAN MELVILLE

CAPTAIN AHAB of the *Pequod*, an American whaling ship, has one paramount ambition in life—to find and kill Moby Dick, the legendary white whale that had upon a previous occasion robbed him of a leg. He makes rendezvous with some German whaler captains, but they have no news of the kind Ahab seeks. Then whales are seen churning through the sea. The boats or “keels” commanded by Stubb, Flask, and Starbuck are lowered, and begin a race with the German boats. How the grim hunt for Ahab’s fabulous whale ends is told in *Moby Dick*, from which this story is taken.

The predestinated day arrived, and we duly met the ship *Jungfrau*, Derick De Deer, master, of Bremen.

At one time the greatest whaling people in the world, the Dutch and Germans are now among the least; but here and

there at very wide intervals of latitude and longitude, you still occasionally meet with their flag in the Pacific.

For some reason, the *Jungfrau* seemed quite eager to pay her respects. While yet some distance from the *Pequod*, she rounded to, and dropping a boat, her captain was impelled towards us, impatiently standing in the bows instead of the stern.

"What has he in his hand there?" cried Starbuck, pointing to something wavingly held by the German. "Impossible!—a lamp-feeder!"

"Not that," said Stubb, "no, no, it's a coffee-pot, Mr. Starbuck; he's coming off to make us our coffee, is the Yarman; don't you see that big tin can there alongside of him?—that's his boiling water. Oh! he's all right, is the Yarman."

"Go along with you," cried Flask, "it's a lamp-feeder and an oil-can. He's out of oil, and has come a-begging."

However curious it may seem for an oil-ship to be borrowing oil on the whale-ground, and however much it may invertedly contradict the old proverb about carrying coals to Newcastle, yet sometimes such a thing really happens; and in the present case Captain Derick De Deer did indubitably conduct a lamp-feeder, as Flask did declare.

As he mounted the deck, Ahab abruptly accosted him, without at all heeding what he had in his hand; but in his broken lingo, the German soon evinced his complete ignorance of the white whale; immediately turning the conversation to his lamp-feeder and oil-can, with some remarks touching his having to turn into his hammock at night in profound darkness—his last drop of Bremen oil being gone, and not a single flying-fish yet captured to supply the deficiency; concluding by hinting that his ship was indeed what in the Fishery is technically called a *clean* one (that is, an empty one), well deserving the name of *Jungfrau* or the *Virgin*.

His necessities supplied, Derick departed; but he had not gained his ship's side, when whales were almost simultaneously raised from the mast-heads of both vessels; and so eager for the chase was Derick, that without pausing to put his oil-can and lamp-feeder aboard, he slewed round his boat and made after the leviathan lamp-feeders.

Now, the game having risen to leeward, he and the other three German boats that soon followed him, had considerably the start of the *Pequod's* keels. There were eight whales, an average pod. Aware of their danger, they were going all abreast with great speed straight before the wind, rubbing their flanks as closely as so many spans of horses in harness. They left a great, wide wake, as though continually unrolling a great wide parchment upon the sea.

Full in this rapid wake, and many fathoms in the rear, swam a huge, humped old bull, which by his comparatively slow progress, as well as by the unusual yellowish incrustations overgrowing him, seemed afflicted with the jaundice, or some other infirmity. Whether this whale belonged to the pod in advance, seemed questionable; for it is not customary for such venerable leviathans to be at all social. Nevertheless, he stuck to their wake, though indeed their back water must have retarded him, because the white-bone or swell at his broad muzzle was a dashed one, like the swell formed when two hostile currents meet. His spout was short, slow, and laborious; coming forth with a choking sort of gush, and spending itself in torn shreds, followed by strange subterranean commotions in him, which seemed to have egress at his other buried extremity, causing the waters behind him to upbubble.

"Who's got some paregoric?" said Stubb, "he has the stomach-ache, I'm afraid. Lord, think of having half an acre of stomach-ache! Adverse winds are holding mad Christmas in him, boys. It's the first foul wind I ever knew to blow from astern; but look, did ever whale yaw so before? it must be, he's lost his tiller."

As an overladen Indiaman bearing down the Hindustan coast with a deck load of frightened horses, careens, buries, rolls, and wallows on her way; so did this old whale heave his aged bulk, and now and then partly turning over on his cumbrous rib-ends, expose the cause of his devious wake in the unnatural stump of his starboard fin. Whether he had lost that fin in battle, or had been born without it, it were hard to say.

"Only wait a bit, old chap, and I'll give ye a sling for that wounded arm," cried cruel Flask, pointing to the whale-line near him.

"Mind he don't sling thee with it," cried Starbuck. "Give way, or the German will have him."

With one intent all the combined rival boats were pointed for this one fish, because not only was he the largest, and therefore the most valuable, whale, but he was nearest to them, and the other whalers were going with such great velocity, moreover, as almost to defy pursuit for the time. At this juncture, the *Pequod's* keels had shot by the three German boats last lowered; but from the great start he had had, Derick's boat still led the chase, though every moment neared by his foreign rivals. The only thing they feared, was, that from being already so nigh to his mark, he would be enabled to dart his iron before they could completely overtake and pass him. As for Derick, he seemed quite confident that this would be the case, and occasionally with a deriding gesture shook his lamp-feeder at the other boats.

"The ungracious and ungrateful dog!" cried Starbuck; "he mocks and dares me with the very poor-box I filled for him not five minutes ago!"—then in his old intense whisper—"give way, greyhounds! Dog to it!"

"I tell ye what it is, men"—cried Stubb to his crew—"It's against my religion to get mad; but I'd like to eat that villainous Yarman—Pull—won't ye? Are ye going to let that rascal beat ye? Do ye love brandy? A hogshead of brandy, then, to the best man. Come, why don't some of ye burst a blood-vessel? Who's that been dropping an anchor overboard—we don't budge an inch—we're becalmed. Halloo, here's grass growing in the boat's bottom—and by the Lord, the best there's budding. This won't do, boys. Look at that Yarman. The short and long of it is, men, will ye spit fire or not?"

"Oh! see the suds he makes!" cried Flask, dancing up and down—"What a hump—Oh, *do* pile on the beef—lays like a log! Oh! my lads, *do* spring—slap-jacks and quohogs for supper, you know, my lads—baked clams and muffins—ho, *do, do*, spring—he's a hundred barreller—don't lose him now—don't, oh, *don't!*—see that Yarman—Oh! won't ye pull for your duff, my lads—such a sog! such a sogger! Don't ye love sperm? There goes three thousand dollars, men!—a bank!—a whole bank! The bank of England!—Oh, *do, do, do!*—What's that Yarman about now?"

At this moment Derick was in the act of pitching his lamp-feeder at the advancing boats, and also his oil-can; perhaps with the double view of retarding his rivals' way, and at the same time economically accelerating his own by the momentary impetus of the backward toss.

"The unmannerly Dutch dogger!" cried Stubb. "Pull now, men, like fifty thousand line-of-battleship loads of red-haired devils. What d'ye say, Tashtego; are you the man to snap your spine in two-and-twenty pieces for the honour of old Gayhead? What d'ye say?"

"I say, pull like god-dam," cried the Indian.

Fiercely, but evenly incited by the taunts of the German, the *Pequod's* three boats now began ranging almost abreast; and, so disposed, momentarily neared him. In that fine, loose, chivalrous attitude of the headsman when drawing near to his prey, the three mates stood up proudly, occasionally backing the after oarsman with an exhilarating cry of, "There she slides, now! Hurrah for the white-ash breeze! Down with the Yarman! Sail over him!"

But so decided an original start had Derick had, that spite of all their gallantry, he would have proved the victor in this race, had not a righteous judgment descended upon him in a crab which caught the blade of his midship oarsman. While this clumsy lubber was striving to free his white-ash, and while, in consequence, Derick's boat was nigh to capsizing, and he thundering away at his men in a mighty rage;—that was a good time for Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask. With a shout, they took a mortal start forwards, and slantingly ranged up on the German's quarter. An instant more, and all four boats were diagonally in the whale's immediate wake, while stretching from them, on both sides, was the foaming swell that he made.

It was a terrific, most pitiable, and maddening sight. The whale was now going head out, and sending his spout before him in a continual tormented jet; while his one poor fin beat his side in an agony of fright. Now to this hand, now to that, he yawed in his faltering flight, and still at every billow that he broke, he spasmodically sank in the sea, or sideways rolled towards the sky his one beating fin. So have I seen a bird with clipped wing, making affrighted broken circles in the air,

vainly striving to escape the piratical hawks. But the bird has a voice, and with plaintive cries will make known her fear; but the fear of this vast dumb brute of the sea, was chained up and enchanted in him; he had no voice, save that choking respiration through his spiracle, and this made the sight of him unspeakably pitiable; while still, in his amazing bulk, portcullis jaw and omnipotent tail, there was enough to appal the stoutest man who so pitied.

Seeing now that but a very few moments more would give the *Pequod's* boats the advantage, and rather than be thus foiled of his game, Derick chose to hazard what to him must have seemed a most unusually long dart, ere the last chance would for ever escape.

But no sooner did his harpooneer stand up for the stroke, than all three tigers—Queequeg, Tashtego, Daggoo—instinctively sprang to their feet, and standing in a diagonal row, simultaneously pointed their barbs; and darted over the head of the German harpooneer, their three Nantucket irons entered the whale. Blinding vapours of foam and white-fire! The three boats in the first fury of the whale's headlong rush, bumped the German's aside with such force, that both Derick and his baffled harpooneer were spilled out, and sailed over by the three flying keels.

"Don't be afraid, my butter-boxes," cried Stubb, casting a passing glance upon them as he shot by; "ye'll be picked up presently—all right—I saw some sharks astern—St. Bernard's dogs, you know—relieve distressed travellers. Huoah! this is the way to sail now. Every keel a sun-beam! Hurrah!—Here we go like three tin kettles at the tail of a mad cougar! This puts me in mind of fastening to an elephant in a tilbury on a plain—makes the wheel-spokes fly, boys, when you fasten to him that way; and there's danger of being pitched out too, when you strike a hill. Hurrah! this is the way a fellow feels when he's going to Davy Jones—all a rush down an endless inclined plane! Hurrah! this whale carries the everlasting mail!"

But the monster's run was a brief one. Giving a sudden gasp, he tumultuously sounded. With a grating rush, the three lines flew round the loggerheads with such a force as to gouge deep grooves in them; while so fearful were the harpooneers that this

rapid sounding would soon exhaust the lines, that using all their dexterous might, they caught repeated smoking turns with the rope to hold on; till at last—owing to the perpendicular strain from the lead-lined chocks of the boats, whence the three ropes went straight down into the blue—the gunwales of the bows were almost even with the water, while the three sterns tilted high in the air. And the whale soon ceasing to sound, for some time they remained in that attitude, fearful of expending more line, though the position was a little ticklish. But though boats have been taken down and lost in this way, yet it is this “holding on”, as it is called, this hooking up by the sharp barbs of his live flesh from the back; this it is that often torments the Leviathan into soon rising again to meet the sharp lance of his foes. Yet not to speak of the peril of the thing, it is to be doubted whether this course is always the best; for it is but reasonable to presume, that the longer the stricken whale stays under water, the more he is exhausted. Because, owing to the enormous surface of him—in a full grown sperm-whale something less than 2,000 square feet—the pressure of the water is immense. We all know what an astonishing atmospheric weight we ourselves stand up under; even here, above-ground, in the air; how vast, then, the burden of a whale, bearing on his back a column of two hundred fathoms of ocean! It must at least equal the weight of fifty atmospheres. One whaleman has estimated it at the weight of twenty line-of-battle ships, with all their guns, and stores, and men on board.

As the three boats lay there on that gently rolling sea, gazing down into its eternal blue noon; and as not a single groan or cry of any sort, nay, not so much as a ripple or a bubble came up from its depths; what landsman would have thought, that beneath all that silence and placidity, the utmost monster of the seas was writhing and wrenching in agony! Not eight inches of perpendicular rope were visible at the bows. Seems it credible that by three such thin threads the great Leviathan was suspended like the big weight to an eight day clock. Suspended? and to what? To three bits of board. Is this creature of whom it was once so triumphantly said, “Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish-spears? The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold, the spear, the dart, nor the

## *The Yellow Whale*

habergeon: he esteemeth iron as straw; the arrow cannot make him flee; darts are counted as stubble; he laugheth at the shaking of a spear!" This the creature? this he? Oh! that unfulfilments should follow the prophets. For with the strength of a thousand thighs in his tail, Leviathan had run his head under the mountains of the sea, to hide him from the *Pequod's* fish-spears!

In that sloping afternoon sunlight, the shadows that the three boats sent down beneath the surface, must have been long enough and broad enough to shade half Xerxes' army. Who can tell how appalling to the wounded whale must have been such huge phantoms flitting over his head!

"Stand by, men; he stirs," cried Starbuck, as the three lines suddenly vibrated in the water, distinctly conducting upwards to them, as by magnetic wires, the life and death throbs of the whale, so that every oarsman felt them in his seat. The next moment, relieved in great part from the downward strain at the bows, the boats gave a sudden bounce upwards, as a small icefield will, when a dense herd of white bears are scared from it into the sea.

"Haul in! Haul in!" cried Starbuck again: "he's rising."

The lines, of which, hardly an instant before, not one hand's breadth could have been gained, were now in long quick coils flung back all dripping into the boats, and soon the whale broke water within two ship's lengths of the hunters.

His motions plainly denoted his extreme exhaustion. In most land animals there are certain valves or flood gates in many of their veins, whereby when wounded, the blood is in some degree at least instantly shut off in certain directions. Not so with the whale; one of whose peculiarities it is, to have an entire non-valvular structure of the blood-vessels, so that when pierced even by so small a point as a harpoon, a deadly drain is at once begun upon his whole arterial system; and when his is heightened by the extraordinary pressure of water at a great distance below the surface, his life may be said to pour from him in incessant streams. Yet so vast is the quantity of blood in him, and so distant and numerous its interior fountains, that he will keep thus bleeding and bleeding for a considerable period; even as in a drought a river will flow, whose source is the well-

springs of far-off and indiscernible hills. Even now, when the boats pulled upon this whale, and perilously drew over his swaying flukes, and the lances were darted into him, they were followed by steady jets from the new-made wound, which kept continually playing, while the natural spouthole in his head was only at intervals, however rapid, sending its affrighted moisture into the air. From this last vent no blood yet came, because no vital part of him had thus far been struck. His life, as they significantly call it, was untouched.

As the boats now more closely surrounded him, the whole upper part of his form, with much of it that is ordinarily submerged, was plainly revealed. His eyes, or rather the places where his eyes had been, were beheld. As strange misgrown masses gather in the knot-holes of the noblest oaks when prostrate, so from the points which the whale's eyes had once occupied, now protruded blind bulbs, horribly pitiable to see. But pity there was none. For all his old age, and his one arm, and his blind eyes, he must die the death and be murdered, in order to light the gay bridals and other merry-makings of men, and also to illuminate the solemn churches that preach unconditional inoffensiveness by all to all. Still rolling in his blood, at last he partially disclosed a strangely discoloured bunch or protuberance, the size of a bushel, low down on the flank.

"A nice spot," cried Flask; "just let me prick him there once."

"Avast!" cried Starbuck, "there's no need of that!"

But humane Starbuck was too late. At the instant of the dart an ulcerous jet shot from this cruel wound, and goaded by it into more than sufferable anguish, the whale now spouting thick blood, with swift fury blindly darted at the craft, bespattering them and their glorying crews all over with showers of gore, capsizing Flask's boat and marring the bows. It was his death stroke. For, by this time, so spent was he by loss of blood, that he helplessly rolled away from the wreck he had made; lay panting on his side, impotently flapped with his stumped fin, then over and over slowly revolved like a waning world; turned up the white secrets of his belly; lay like a log, and died. It was most piteous, that last expiring spout. As when by

### *The Yellow Whale*

unseen hands the water is gradually drawn off from some mighty fountain, and with half-stifled melancholy gurglings the spray-column lowers and lowers to the ground—so the last long dying spout of the whale.

Soon, while the crews were awaiting the arrival of the ship, the body showed symptoms of sinking with all its treasures unrifled. Immediately, by Starbuck's orders, lines were secured to it at different points, so that ere long every boat was a buoy; the sunken whale being suspended a few inches beneath them by the cords. By very heedful management, when the ship drew nigh, the whale was transferred to her side, and was strongly secured there by the stiffest fluke-chains, for it was plain that unless artificially upheld, the body would at once sink to the bottom.

It so chanced that almost upon first cutting into him with the spade, the entire length of a corroded harpoon was found imbedded in his flesh, on the lower part of the bunch before described. But as the stumps of harpoons are frequently found in the dead bodies of captured whales, with the flesh perfectly healed around them, and no prominence of any kind to denote their place; therefore, there must needs have been some other unknown reason in the present case fully to account for the ulceration alluded to. But still more curious was the fact of a lance-head of stone being found in him, not far from the buried iron, the flesh perfectly firm about it. Who had darted that stone lance? And when? It might have been darted by some Nor'-West Indian long before America was discovered.

What other marvels might have been rummaged out of this monstrous cabinet there is no telling. But a sudden stop was put to further discoveries, by the ship's being unprecedentedly dragged over sideways to the sea, owing to the body's immensely increasing tendency to sink. However, Starbuck, who had the ordering of affairs, hung on to it to the last; hung on to it so resolutely, indeed, that when at length the ship would have been capsized, if still persisting in locking arms with the body; then, when the command was given to break clear from it, such was the immovable strain upon the timber-heads to which the fluke-chains and cables were fastened, that it was impossible to cast them off. Meantime everything in the *Pequod* was aslant.

To cross to the other side of the deck was like walking up the steep gabled roof of a house. The ship groaned and gasped. Many of the ivory inlayings of her bulwarks and cabins were started from their places, by the unnatural dislocation. In vain handspikes and crows were brought to bear upon the immovable fluke-chains, to pry them adrift from the timber-heads; and so low had the whale now settled that the submerged ends could not be at all approached, while every moment whole tons of ponderosity seemed added to the sinking bulk, and the ship seemed on the point of going over.

"Hold on, hold on, won't ye?" cried Stubb to the body, "don't be in such a devil of a hurry to sink! By thunder, men, we must do something or go for it. No use prying there; avast, I say, with your handspikes, and run one of ye for a prayer book and a penknife, and cut the big chains."

"Knife? Aye, aye," cried Queequeg, and seizing the carpenter's heavy hatchet, he leaned out of a porthole, and steel to iron, began slashing at the largest fluke-chains. But a few strokes, full of sparks, were given, when the exceeding strain effected the rest. With a terrific snap, every fastening went adrift; the ship righted, the carcass sunk.

Now, this occasional inevitable sinking of the recently killed sperm-whale is a very curious thing; nor has any fisherman yet adequately accounted for it. Usually the dead sperm-whale floats with great buoyancy, with its side or belly considerably elevated above the surface. If the only whales that thus sank were old, meagre, and broken-hearted creatures, their pads of lard diminished and all their bones heavy and rheumatic; then you might with some reason assert that this sinking is caused by an uncommon specific gravity in the fish so sinking, consequent upon this absence of buoyant matter in him. But it is not so. For young whales, in the highest health, and swelling with noble aspirations, prematurely cut off in the warm flush and May of life, with all their panting lard about them; even these brawny, buoyant heroes do sometimes sink.

Be it said, however, that the sperm-whale is far less liable to this accident than any other species. Where one of that sort go down, twenty Right whales do. This difference in the species is no doubt imputable in no small degree to the greater

quantity of bone in the Right whale; his Venetian blinds alone sometimes weighing more than a ton; from this incumbrance the sperm-whale is wholly free. But there are instances where, after the lapse of many hours or several days, the sunken whale again rises, more buoyant than in life. But the reason of this is obvious. Gases are generated in him; he swells to a prodigious magnitude; becomes a sort of animal balloon. A line-of-battle ship could hardly keep him under then. In the Shore Whaling, on soundings, among the Bays of New Zealand, when a Right whale gives token of sinking, they fasten buoys to him, with plenty of rope; so that when the body has gone down, they know where to look for it when it shall have ascended again.

It was not long after the sinking of the body that a cry was heard from the *Pequod's* mast-heads, announcing that the *Jungfrau* was again lowering her boats; though the only spout in sight was that of a Fin-Back, belonging to the species of uncapturable whales, because of its incredible power of swimming. Nevertheless, the Fin-Back's spout is so similar to the sperm-whale's, that by unskilful fishermen it is often mistaken for it. And consequently Derick and all his host were now in valiant chase of this unwarable brute. The *Virgin* crowding all sail, made after her four young keels, and thus they all disappeared far to leeward, still in bold, hopeful chase.

Oh! many are the Fin-Backs, and many are the Dericks, my friend.



## *Dangerous Shoals*

JOHN BARROW

THIS account of Captain Cook's discovery of Botany Bay, five miles south of the present city of Sydney, and kangaroos, and of his cruise in the *Endeavour* among the dangerous shoals fringing the eastern coastline of Australia, is based on the actual journals kept by the famous seaman and explorer. It was about a century ago that John Barrow prepared a single volume from the journals, which covered three separate voyages made by Cook. The Indians described as seen on the shore are Australian aborigines, otherwise blackfellows. To explorers of the eighteenth century most natives of newly discovered lands were "Indians." The narrative is from *Captain Cook's Voyages of Discovery*.

They sailed from Cape Farewell on the 31st of March 1770, and had fine weather and a fair wind till the 9th of April, when they

saw a tropic bird. On the 16th a small land-bird perched on the rigging, from which they concluded they were near land; but found no ground with one hundred and twenty fathoms. At six o'clock in the morning of the 19th, they discovered land four or five leagues distant; the southernmost part of which was called Point Hicks, in compliment to the first lieutenant. At noon they discovered another point of the same land, rising in a round hillcock, extremely like the Ram-Head at the entrance of Plymouth Sound, for which reason Captain Cook gave it the same name. What they had yet seen of the land was low and even; and the inland parts were green, and covered with wood. They now saw three waterspouts at the same time, one of which continued a quarter of an hour.

On the 27th they saw several of the inhabitants walking along the shore, four of them carrying a canoe on their shoulders; but they did not attempt coming off to the ship.

In the evening, a light breeze springing up, they sailed to the northward, where they discovered several people on shore. They brandished their weapons, and threw themselves into threatening attitudes. They talked to each other with great emotion; and each of them held a kind of scimitar in his hand.

They anchored opposite a village of about eight houses, and observed an old woman and three children come out of a wood, laden with fuel: all of them were quite naked. The old woman frequently looked at the ship with the utmost indifference, and, as soon as she had made a fire, they set about dressing their dinner with perfect composure.

Having formed a design of landing, the boats were manned; and they had no sooner come near the shore, than two men advanced, as if to dispute their setting foot on land. Captain Cook threw them beads, nails, and other trifles, which they took up and seemed to be delighted with. He then made signs that he wanted water, and used every possible means to convince them that no injury was intended. They now made signs to the boat's crew to land, on which they put the boat in; but they had no sooner done so, than the two Indians came again to oppose them. A musket was now fired between them, on the report of which one of them dropped a bundle of lances, which he instantly snatched up again. One of them then threw a stone

at the boat, on which Captain Cook ordered a musket, loaded with small shot, to be fired, which wounded the eldest of them on the legs; he retired with speed. The people in the boats now landed, imagining that the wound which this man had received would put an end to the contest; in this, however, they were mistaken, for he immediately returned with a kind of shield, and advancing with great intrepidity, they both discharged their lances at the boat's crew, but did not wound any of them. Another musket was now fired at them; on which they threw another lance, and then took to their heels. The crew now went up to the huts, in one of which they found the children, who had secreted themselves behind some bark. Here they left some pieces of cloth, ribbons, beads, and other things; and taking several of the lances, re-embarked in the boat.

They now sailed to the north point of the bay, where they found plenty of fresh water. Some men having been sent to get wood and water, they no sooner came on board to dinner, than the natives came down to the place, and examined the casks with great attention, but did not offer to remove them.

On Tuesday, May the 1st, the south point of the bay was named Sutherland Point, one of the seamen of the name of Sutherland, having died that day, and been buried on shore. This day Captain Cook and a few other gentlemen, went on shore, and left more presents in the huts, such as looking-glasses, combs, etc., but the former presents had not been taken away. The second-licutenant, Mr. Gore, having been with a boat to dredge for oysters saw some Indians, who made signs for him to come on shore, which he declined. Having finished his business he sent the boat away, and went by land with a midshipman, to join the party that was getting water. In their way they met with more than twenty of the natives, who followed them so close as to come within a few yards of them. Mr. Gore stopped and faced them; on which the Indians stopped also, and when he proceeded again they followed him; but they did not attack him, though they had each man his lance. The Indians coming in sight of the waterers, stood still at the distance of a quarter of a mile, while Mr. Gore and his companion reached their shipmates in safety.

They fished with great success here, and the second licutenant

struck what is called the sting-ray, which weighed near two hundred and fifty pounds. Soon after a fish of the same kind was caught, which weighed three hundred and fifty pounds.

While Captain Cook remained in the harbour, the English colours were displayed on shore daily, and the name of the ship, with the date of the year, was carved on a tree near the place where they took in their water.

They sailed from Botany Bay, as Captain Cook had named this place, on the 6th of May 1770; at noon were off a harbour, which they called Port Jackson, and in the evening near a bay, to which they gave the name of Broken Bay. On the 13th, they saw the smoke of many fires on a point of land, which was therefore called Smoky Cape. As they proceeded northward from Botany Bay, the land appeared high and well covered with wood. Two days after, the captain discovered a high point of land, which he called Cape Byron.

They had, for some days past, seen the sea-birds, called boobies, which, from half an hour before sunrising, to half an hour after, were continually passing the ship in large flights; from which it was conjectured that there was a river or inlet of shallow water to the southward, where they went to feed in the day, returning in the evening to some islands to the northward. In honour of Captain Hervey, this bay was called Hervey's Bay.

The Captain, with a party, went on shore the 23rd. They landed a little within the point of a bay, which led into a large lagoon, by the sides of which grows the true mangrove. There were many nests of a singular kind of ant, as green as grass, in the branches of these mangroves, which likewise afforded shelter for immense numbers of green caterpillars—their bodies were covered with hairs, which, on the touch, gave a pain similar to the sting of a nettle, but much more acute. They saw, among the sandbanks, many birds larger than swans, which they imagined were pelicans; and they shot a kind of bustard, which weighed seventeen pounds. This bird proved very delicate food, and gave name to the place, which was called Bustard Bay. They likewise shot a duck of a most beautiful plumage, with a white beak. They found vast numbers of oysters of various sorts, and, among the rest, some hammer oysters of a curious

kind. While they were in the woods, several of the natives came down and took a survey of the ship, and then departed. They sailed the next morning, and on the day following were abreast of a point, which lying immediately under the tropic, the captain called Cape Capricorn, on the west side of which they saw an amazing number of birds resembling the pelican, some of which were near five feet high.

On the 27th, in the morning, they sailed to the northward, and to the northernmost point of land Captain Cook gave the name of Cape Manifold, from the number of high hills appearing above it. Between this cape and the shore is a bay called Keppel's Bay, and some islands bearing the same name. In this place the Captain intended to lay the ship ashore and clean her bottom; and accordingly landed, in search of a proper place for the purpose. They found walking extremely incommodious, the ground being covered with grass, the seeds of which were sharp and bearded. They were likewise tormented with the perpetual stinging of mosquitoes. In the interior parts of the country they found gum-trees, on the branches of which were white ants' nests formed of clay, as big as a bushel. On another tree they found black ants, which formed their lodging in the body of it, after they had eaten away the pith; yet the trees were in a flourishing condition. They found butterflies in such incredible numbers, that whichever way they looked, many thousands were to be seen in the air; while every bough and twig was covered with multitudes. They likewise discovered on dry ground, where it was supposed to have been left by the tide, a fish about the size of a minnow, having two strong breast fins, with which it leaped away as nimbly as a frog. There being no good water to be found here they did not lay the ship ashore, as they intended.

After passing Cape Cleveland, they ranged northward along the shore, towards a cluster of islands, on one of which about forty men, women, and children, were standing together, and looking at the ship with a curiosity never observed among these people before. As no accident of any moment had befallen our adventurers, during a navigation of more than 1,300 miles, upon a coast everywhere abounding with the most dangerous rocks and shoals, no name expressive of distress had hitherto

### *Dangerous Shoals*

been given to any cape or point of land which they had seen. But they now gave the name of Cape Tribulation to a point which they had just discovered, as they here became acquainted with misfortune. This cape is in  $16^{\circ} 6'$  south latitude, and  $214^{\circ} 39'$  west longitude.

To avoid the danger of some rocks, they shortened sail, and kept standing off from six o'clock in the evening till near nine, with a fine breeze, and bright moon. They had got from fourteen into twenty-one fathoms water, when suddenly they fell into twelve, ten, and eight fathoms, in a few minutes. Every man was instantly ordered to his station, and they were on the point of anchoring, when, on a sudden, they had again deep water, so that they thought all danger was at an end, concluding they had sailed over the tail of some shoals which they had seen in the evening. In less than an hour, however, the water shallowed at once from twenty to seventeen fathoms; and, before soundings could be again taken, the ship struck against a rock, and remained fixed but from the motion given her from the beating of the surge. Every one was instantly on deck, with countenances fully expressive of the agitation of their minds. As they knew they were not near the shore, they concluded they had struck against a rock of coral, the points of which being sharp, and the surface so rough, as to grind away whatever is rubbed against it, though with a gentle motion, they had reason to dread the horror of their situation.

The sails being taken in, and boats hoisted out to examine the depth of water, they found that the ship had been carried over a ledge of the rock, and lay in a hollow within it. She beat so violently that the crew could scarcely keep on their legs. The moon now shone bright, by the light of which they could see the sheathing boards float from the bottom of the vessel, till at length the false keel followed, so that they expected instant destruction. Their best chance of escaping seemed now to be by lightening her. They therefore instantly started the water in the hold, and pumped it up. The decayed stores, oil-jars, casks, ballast, six of their guns, and other things, were thrown overboard, in order to get at the heavier articles; and in this business they were employed till daybreak, during all which time it was observed that not an oath was sworn,

so much were the minds of the sailors impressed with a sense of their danger.

At daylight they saw land at eight leagues' distance; but not a single island between them and the main; so that the destruction of the greater part of them would have been inevitable, had the ship gone to pieces. It happened, however, that the wind died away to a dead calm before noon. As they expected high water at eleven o'clock, everything was prepared to make another effort to free the ship; but the tide fell so much short of that in the night, that she did not float by eighteen inches, though they had thrown overboard near fifty tons weight; they now, therefore, renewed their toil, and threw overboard everything that could be possibly spared. As the tide fell, the water poured in so rapidly, that they could scarcely keep her free by the constant working of two pumps. Their only hope now depended on the midnight tide, and preparations were accordingly made for another effort to get the ship off. The tide began to rise at five o'clock, when the leak likewise increased to such a degree, that three pumps were kept going till nine o'clock, at which time the ship righted; but so much water had been admitted by the leak, that they expected she would sink as soon as the water should bear her off the rock.

Their situation was now deplorable beyond description, and the imagination must paint what would baffle the powers of language to describe. They knew that when the fatal moment should arrive, all authority would be at an end. The boats were incapable of conveying them all on shore, and they dreaded a contest for the preference, as more shocking than the shipwreck itself; yet, it was considered, that those who might be left on board, would eventually meet with a milder fate than those who, by gaining the shore, would have no chance but to linger the remains of life among the rudest savages in the universe, and in a country where firearms would barely enable them to support a wretched existence.

At twenty minutes after ten the ship floated, and was heaved into deep water; when they were happy to find she did not admit more water than she had done before; yet, as the leak had for a considerable time gained on the pumps, there was now three feet nine inches water in the hold. By this time the men

were so worn by fatigue of mind and body, that none of them could pump more than five or six minutes at a time, and then threw themselves, quite spent, on the deck. The succeeding man being fatigued in his turn, threw himself down in the same manner, while the former jumped up and renewed his labour; thus mutually struggling for life, till the following accident had like to have given them up a prey to absolute despair.

Between the inside lining of the ship's bottom, and the outside planking, there is a space of about seventeen or eighteen inches. The man who had hitherto taken the depth of water at the well, had taken it no farther than the ceiling; but being now relieved by another person, who took the depth to the outside planking, it appeared by this mistake that the leak had suddenly gained upon the pumps, the whole difference between the two plankings. This circumstance deprived them of all hopes, and scarce any one thought it worth while to labour for the longer preservation of a life which must so soon have a period. But the mistake was soon discovered; and the joy arising from such unexpected good news, inspired the men with so much vigour, that before eight o'clock in the morning, they had pumped out considerably more water than they had shipped. They now talked confidently of getting the ship into some harbour, and set heartily to work to get in their anchors; one of which, and the cable of another, they lost. Having a good breeze from the sea, they got under sail at eleven o'clock, and stood for the land.

As they could not discover the exact situation of the leak, they had no prospect of stopping it within side of the vessel; but the following expedient, which one of the midshipmen had formerly seen tried with success, was adopted. They took an old studding-sail, and having mixed a large quantity of oakum and wool, chopped small, it was stitched down in handfuls on the sail, as light as possible; the dung of their sheep and other filth being spread over it. Thus prepared, the sail was hauled under the ship by ropes, which kept it extended till it came under the leak, where the suction carried in the oakum and wool from the surface of the sail. This experiment succeeded so well, that instead of three pumps, the water was easily kept under with one.

They hitherto had no further view than to run the ship into a

harbour, and build a vessel from her materials in which they might reach the East Indies; but they now began to think of finding a proper place to repair her damage, and then to pursue their voyage on its original plan. At six in the evening they anchored seven leagues from the shore; and next morning they passed two islands, which were called Hope Islands. In the afternoon the master was sent out with two boats to sound, and search for a harbour where the ship might be repaired. They anchored at sunset in four fathoms, two miles from the shore. One of the mates being out in the pinnace, returned at nine o'clock, reporting that he had found just such a harbour as was wanted, at the distance of two leagues.

At six o'clock the next morning they sailed, and soon anchored about a mile from the shore, when the Captain went out and found the channel very narrow, but the harbour was better adapted for their present purpose than any place they had seen in the whole course of their voyage. As it blew very fresh this day and the following night, they could not venture to run into the harbour, but remained at anchor during the two succeeding days.

The wind continued fresh till the 17th, but they then resolved to push in for the harbour, and, with some difficulty, moored the ship alongside of a beach.

Early in the morning of the 22nd, the tide left the ship, and they proceeded to examine the leak, when they found that the rocks had cut through four planks into the timbers, and that three other planks were damaged. In these breaches, not a splinter was to be seen, the whole being smooth, as if cut away by an instrument: but the preservation of the vessel was owing to a very singular circumstance. One of the holes was large enough to have sunk her, even with eight pumps constantly at work; but this hole was, in a great measure, stopped up by the fragment of the rock being left sticking in it. They likewise found some pieces of oakum, wool, etc., which had got between the timbers, and stopped many parts of the leak, which had been left open by the stone. Exclusive of the leak, great damage was done to various parts of the ship's bottom.

While the smiths and carpenters were engaged, some of the crew were sent across the river to shoot pigeons for the sick.

These people found a stream of fresh water, discovered many Indian houses, and had sight of a mouse-coloured animal, extremely swift, and about the size of a greyhound. Next day many of the crew saw the animal above-mentioned.

On the 14th, Mr Gore shot one of the mouse-coloured animals. The skin of this beast, which is called Kangaroo, is covered with short fur; the head and ears are somewhat like those of a hare: this animal was dressed for dinner, and proved fine eating.

The natives being now become familiar with the ship's crew, one of them was desired to throw his lance, which he did with such dexterity and force, that though it was not above four feet from the ground, at the highest, it penetrated deeply into a tree at the distance of fifty yards. On the 19th, they saw several of the women, who, as well as the men, were quite naked. They were this day visited by ten of the natives, who seemed resolved to have one of the turtle that was on board, which being refused, they expressed the utmost rage and resentment. At length they laid hands on two of the turtles, and drew them to the side of the ship where the canoe lay; but the sailors took them away. They made several similar attempts, but being equally unsuccessful, they leaped suddenly into their canoe, and rowed off. At this instant the Captain with Mr. Banks and five or six seamen, went ashore, where they arrived before the Indians. As soon as the Indians landed, one of them snatched a firebrand from under a pitch-kettle, and running to the windward of what effects were on the shore, set fire to the dry grass, which burnt rapidly, damaged the ship's forge, and endangered one of the tents. Appearing determined on farther mischief, a musket loaded with small shot, was now fired, and one of them being wounded, they ran off.

The natives continuing still in sight, a musket charged with ball was fired near them: upon hearing which they soon got out of sight: but their voices being soon heard in the woods, the Captain, with a few of the men, went to meet them. When they were in sight of each other, both parties stopped, except an old Indian, who advanced before the rest a little way, and speaking a few words, retreated to his brethren. The English having seized some of their darts, followed them about a mile, and then

sat down; the Indians sitting about a hundred yards from them. The old man again came forward, having in his hand a lance with a point. He stopped and spoke several times; on which the Captain made signs of friendship. The old Indian now turned to his companions, and having spoken to them, they placed their lances against a tree, and came forward as in friendship; whereupon their darts, which had been taken, were returned, and the whole quarrel seemed to be at an end. When Captain Cook got on board, he saw the woods burning at the distance of two miles from the fire thus kindled by the natives.

The master having been sent to search for a passage to the northward, returned with an account that he could not find any. By the night of the 20th, the fire had extended many miles round them on the hills. The next day one of the seamen, who had strayed from his company, met with four Indians at dinner; he was alarmed at this unexpected meeting, but had prudence enough to conceal his apprehensions, and sitting down by them, gave them his knife, which having all looked at, they returned. He would then have left them; but they chose to detain him, till, by feeling his hands and face, they were convinced he was made of flesh and blood like themselves. They then dismissed him, directing him the nearest way to the ship.

On the 4th of August they put to sea, and at noon came to an anchor, when the Captain gave the name of Cape Bedford to the northernmost point of land in sight, and that of Endeavour River to the harbour which they had quitted.

During the six following days, they struggled incessantly to sail safely past the shoals and breakers, by which they were every way surrounded. After a conversation held among the officers, it was their concurrent opinion, that it would be best to leave the coast, and stand out to sea; and in consequence of these sentiments, they sailed on the 13th of August 1770, and got in an open sea, after having been surrounded by dreadful shoals and rocks for nearly three months. They had now sailed above a thousand miles, during all which run they had been obliged to keep sounding, without intermission; a circumstance which, it is supposed, never happened to any ship but the *Endeavour*. Captain Cook observes in his Journal that they were

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made "quite easy at being freed from fears of shoals, etc., after having been entangled among them more or less ever since the 26th May, in which time they had sailed 360 leagues without ever having had a man out of the chains heaving the lead when the ship was under sail."



## *Steerage to Liberty*

CHARLES DICKENS

To escape from his troubles in England, and hoping to begin a new life and mend his fortunes, Martin Chuzzlewit travels steerage to the much-publicized Land of Liberty. He is accompanied by his man Mark Tapley, whose spirits remain as buoyant as a cork in the most depressing circumstances. The two very different companions in this kind of democratic travel are perfect foils for each other, and enjoy the strong mutual attraction of contrasting characters. The voyage, which took several weeks, was made in the middle of last century, and the condition of the steerage passengers was vastly different from any experienced by transatlantic voyagers a century later. This story is taken from the novel named after Mark's master, *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

A dark and dreary night; people nestling in their beds or

circling late about the fire; Want, colder than Charity, shivering at the street corners; church-towers humming with the faint vibration of their own tongues, but newly resting from the ghostly preachment "One!" The earth covered with a sable pall as for the burial of yesterday; the clumps of dark trees, its giant plumes of funeral feathers, waving sadly to and fro: all hushed, all noiseless, and in deep repose, save the swift clouds that skim across the moon, and the cautious wind, as, creeping after them upon the ground, it stops to listen, and goes rustling on, and stops again, and follows, like a savage on the trail.

Whither go the clouds and wind, so eagerly? If, like guilty spirits, they repair to some dread conference with powers like themselves, in what wild regions do the elements hold council, or where unbend in terrible disport?

Here! Free from that cramped prison called the earth, and out upon the waste of waters. Here, roaring, raging, shrieking, howling, all night long. Hither come the sounding voices from the caverns on the coast of that small island, sleeping, a thousand miles away, so quietly in the midst of angry waves; and hither, to meet them, rush the blasts from unknown desert places of the world. Here, in the fury of their unchecked liberty, they storm and buffet with each other, until the sea, lashed into passion like their own, leaps up, in ravings mightier than theirs, and the whole scene is madness.

On, on, on, over the countless miles of angry space roll the long heaving billows. Mountains and caves are here, and yet are not; for what is now the one, is now the other; and all is but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit, and flight, and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggle, ending in a spouting-up of foam that whitens the black night; incessant change of place, and form, and hue; constancy in nothing, but eternal strife; on, on, on, they roll, and darker grows the night, and louder howls the wind, and more clamorous and fierce become the million voices in the sea, when the wild cry goes forth upon the storm "A ship!"

Onward she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her tall masts trembling, and her timbers starting on the strain; onward she comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low down in the hollows of the sea, as hiding for the moment from

its fury; and every storm-voice in the air and water, cries more loudly yet, "A ship!"

Still she comes striving on: and at her boldness and the spreading cry, the angry waves rise up above each other's hoary heads to look; and round about the vessel, far as the mariners on the decks can pierce into the gloom, they press upon her, forcing each other down, and starting up, and rushing forward from afar, in dreadful curiosity. High over her they break; and round her surge and roar; and giving place to others, moaningly depart, and dash themselves to fragments in their baffled anger. Still she comes onward bravely. And though the eager multitude crowd thick and fast upon her all the night, and dawn of day discovers the untiring train yet bearing down upon the ship in an eternity of troubled water, onward she comes, with dim lights burning in her hull, and people there, asleep: as if no deadly element were peering in at every seam and chink, and no drowned seaman's grave, with but a plank to cover it, were yawning in the unfathomable depths below.

Among these sleeping voyagers were Martin and Mark Tapley, who, rocked into a heavy drowsiness by the unaccustomed motion, were as insensible to the foul air in which they lay, as to the uproar without. It was broad day, when the latter awoke with a dim idea that he was dreaming of having gone to sleep in a four-post bedstead which had turned bottom upwards in the course of the night. There was more reason in this too, than in the roasting of eggs; for the first objects Mr. Tapley recognized when he opened his eyes were his own heels—looking down to him, as he afterwards observed, from a nearly perpendicular elevation.

"Well!" said Mark, getting himself into a sitting posture, after various ineffectual struggles with the rolling of the ship. "This is the first time as ever I stood on my head all night."

"You shouldn't go to sleep upon the ground with your head to leeward then," growled a man in one of the berths.

"With my head to *where*?" asked Mark.

The man repeated his previous sentiment.

"No, I won't another time," said Mark, "when I know whereabouts on the map that country is. In the meanwhile I can give

you a better piece of advice. Don't you nor any other friend of mine never go to sleep with his head in a ship, any more."

The man gave a grunt of discontented acquiescence, turned over in his berth, and drew his blanket over his head.

"—For," said Mr. Tapley, pursuing the theme by way of soliloquy, in a low tone of voice; "the sea is as nonsensical a thing as any going. It never knows what to do with itself. It hasn't got no employment for its mind, and is always in a state of vacancy. Like them Polar bears in the wild-beast shows as is constantly a nodding their heads from side to side, it never *can* be quiet. Which is entirely owing to its uncommon stupidity."

"Is that you, Mark?" asked a faint voice from another berth.

"It's as much of me as is left, sir, after a fortnight of this work," Mr. Tapley replied. "What with leading the life of a fly, ever since I've been aboard—for I've been perpetually holding-on to something or other, in a upside-down position—what with that, sir, and putting a very little into myself, and taking a good deal out of yourself, there ain't too much of me to swear by. How do *you* find yourself this morning, sir?"

"Very miserable," said Martin, with a peevish groan. "Ugh! This is wretched, indeed!"

"Creditable," muttered Mark, pressing one hand upon his aching head and looking round him with a rueful grin. "That's the great comfort. It *is* creditable to keep up one's spirits here. Virtue's its own reward. So's jollity."

Mark was so far right, that unquestionably any man who retained his cheerfulness among the steerage accommodations of that noble and fast sailing line-of-packet ship, *The Screw*, was solely indebted to his own resources, and shipped his good humour, like his provisions, without any contribution or assistance from the owners. A dark, low, stifling cabin, surrounded by berths all filled to overflowing with men, women, and children, in various stages of sickness and misery, is not the liveliest place of assembly at any time; but when it is so crowded (as the steerage cabin of *The Screw* was, every passage out), that mattresses and beds are heaped upon the floor, to the extinction of everything like comfort, cleanliness, and decency, it is liable to operate not only as a pretty strong barrier against amiability of temper, but as a positive encourager of selfish

and rough humours. Mark felt this, as he sat looking about him; and his spirits rose proportionately.

There were English people, Irish people, Welsh people, and Scotch people there; all with their little store of coarse food and shabby clothes; and nearly all, with their families of children. There were children of all ages; from the baby at the breast, to the slattern-girl who was as much a grown woman as her mother. Every kind of domestic suffering that is bred in poverty, illness, banishment, sorrow, and long travel in bad weather, was crammed into the little space; and yet was there infinitely less of complaint and querulousness, and infinitely more of mutual assistance and general kindness to be found in that unwholesome ark, than in many brilliant ballrooms.

Mark looked about him wistfully, and his face brightened as he looked. Here an old grandmother was crooning over a sick child, and rocking it to and fro, in arms hardly more wasted than its own young limbs; here a poor woman with an infant in her lap, mended another little creature's clothes, and quieted another who was creeping up about her from their scanty bed upon the floor. Here were old men awkwardly engaged in little household offices, wherein they would have been ridiculous but for their goodwill and kind purpose; and here were swarthy fellows—giants in their way—doing such little acts of tenderness for those about them, as might have belonged to gentlest-hearted dwarfs. The very idiot in the corner who sat mowing there, all day, had his faculty of imitation roused by what he saw about him; and snapped his fingers, to amuse a crying child.

"Now, then," said Mark, nodding to a woman who was dressing her three children at no great distance from him: and the grin upon his face had by this time spread from ear to ear: "Hand over one of them young uns according to custom."

"I wish you'd get breakfast, Mark, instead of worrying with people who don't belong to you," observed Martin, petulantly.

"All right," said Mark. "*She*'ll do that. It's a fair division of labour, sir. I wash her boys, and she makes our tea. I never *could* make tea, but any one can wash a boy."

The woman, who was delicate and ill, felt and understood his kindness, as well she might, for she had been covered every night with his great-coat, while he had had for his own bed the

bare boards and a rug. But, Martin, who seldom got up or looked about him, was quite incensed by the folly of this speech, and expressed his dissatisfaction, by an impatient groan.

"So it is, certainly," said Mark, brushing the child's hair as coolly as if he had been born and bred a barber.

"What are you talking about, now?" asked Martin.

"What you said," replied Mark; "or what you meant, when you gave that there dismal vent to your feelings. I quite go along with it, sir. It is very hard upon her."

"What is?"

"Making the voyage by herself along with these young impediments here, and going such a way at such a time of the year to join her husband. If you don't want to be driven mad with yellow soap in your eye young man," said Mr. Tapley to the second urchin, who was by this time under his hands at the basin, "you'd better shut it."

"Where does she join her husband?" asked Martin, yawning.

"Why, I'm very much afraid," said Mr. Tapley, in a low voice, "that she don't know. I hope she mayn't miss him. But she sent her last letter by hand, and it don't seem to have been very clearly understood between 'em without it, and if she don't see him a waving his pocket-hankerchief on the shore, like a picture out of a song-book, my opinion is, she'll break her heart."

"Why, how, in Folly's name, does the woman come to be on board ship on such a wild-goose venture!" cried Martin.

Mr. Tapley glanced at him for a moment as he lay prostrate in his berth, and then said, very quietly:

"Ah! How, indeed! I can't think! He's been away from her, for two year: she's been very poor and lonely in her own country; and has always been a looking forward to meeting him. It's very strange she should be here. Quite amazing! A little mad, perhaps! There can't be no other way of accounting for it."

Martin was too far gone in the lassitude of seasickness to make any reply to these words, or even to attend to them as they were spoken. And the subject of their discourse returning at this crisis with some hot tea, effectually put a stop to any resumption of the theme by Mr. Tapley; who, when the meal

was over and he had adjusted Martin's bed, went up on deck to wash the breakfast service, which consisted of two half-pint tin mugs, and a shaving-pot of the same metal.

It is due to Mark Tapley to state, that he suffered at least as much from seasickness as any man, woman, or child, on board; and that he had a peculiar faculty of knocking himself about on the smallest provocation, and losing his legs at every lurch of the ship. But resolved, in his usual phrase, to "come out strong" under disadvantageous circumstances, he was the life and soul of the steerage, and made no more of stopping in the middle of a facetious conversation to go away and be excessively ill by himself, and afterwards come back in the very best and gayest of tempers to resume it, than if such a course of proceeding had been the commonest in the world.

It cannot be said that as his illness wore off, his cheerfulness and good nature increased, because they would hardly admit of augmentation; but his usefulness among the weaker members of the party was much enlarged; and at all times and seasons there he was exerting it. If a gleam of sun shone out of the dark sky, down Mark tumbled into the cabin, and presently up he came again with a woman in his arms, or half-a-dozen children, or a man, or a bed, or a saucepan, or a basket, or something animate or inanimate, that he thought would be the better for the air. If an hour or two of fine weather in the middle of the day, tempted those who seldom or never came on deck at other times, to crawl into the long-boat, or lie down upon the spare spars, and try to eat, there, in the centre of the group, was Mr. Tapley, handing about salt beef and biscuit, or dispensing tastes of grog, or cutting up the children's provisions with his pocket-knife, for their greater ease and comfort, or reading aloud from a venerable newspaper, or singing some roaring old song to a select party, or writing the beginnings of letters to their friends at home for people who couldn't write, or cracking jokes with the crew, or nearly getting blown over the side, or emerging, half-drowned, from a shower of spray, or lending a hand somewhere or other; but always doing something for the general entertainment. At night, when the cooking-fire was lighted on the deck, and the driving sparks that flew among the rigging, and the cloud of sails, seemed to menace the ship

with certain annihilation by fire, in case the elements of air and water failed to compass her destruction; there, again, was Mr. Tapley, with his coat off and his shirt-sleeves turned up to his elbows, doing all kinds of culinary offices; compounding the strangest dishes; recognized by every one as an established authority; and helping all parties to achieve something, which, left to themselves, they never could have done, and never would have dreamed of. In short, there never was a more popular character than Mark Tapley became, on board that noble and fast-sailing line-of-packet ship, *The Screw*; and he attained at last to such a pitch of universal admiration, that he began to have grave doubts within himself whether a man might reasonably claim any credit for being jolly under such exciting circumstances.

"Well, Mark," said Martin, near whose berth he had ruminated. "When will this be over?"

"Another week, they say, sir," returned Mark, "will most likely bring us into port. The ship's a going along at present, as sensible as a ship can, sir; though I don't mean to say as that's any very high praise."

"I don't think it is, indeed," groaned Martin.

"You'd feel all the better for it, sir, if you was to turn out," observed Mark.

"And be seen by the ladies and gentlemen on the after-deck," returned Martin, with a scornful emphasis upon the words, "mingling with the beggarly crowd that are stowed away in this vile hole. I should be greatly the better for that, no doubt!"

"I'm thankful that I can't say from my own experience what the feelings of a gentleman may be," said Mark, "but I should have thought, sir, as a gentleman would feel a deal more uncomfortable down here, than up in the fresh air, especially when the ladies and gentlemen in the after-cabin know just as much about him, as he does about them, and are likely to trouble their heads about him in the same proportion. I should have thought that, certainly."

"I tell you, then," rejoined Martin, "you would have thought wrong, and do think wrong."

"Very likely, sir," said Mark, with imperturbable good temper. "I often do."

"As to lying here," cried Martin, raising himself on his elbow, and looking angrily at his follower. "Do you suppose it's a pleasure to lie here?"

"All the madhouses in the world," said Mr. Tapley, "couldn't produce such a maniac as the man must be who could think that."

"Then why are you for ever goading and urging me to get up?" asked Martin. "I lie here because I don't wish to be recognized, in the better days to which I aspire, by any purse-proud citizen, as the man who came over with him among the steerage passengers. I lie here, because I wish to conceal my circumstances and myself, and not to arrive in a new world badged and ticketed as an utterly poverty-stricken man. If I could have afforded a passage in the after-cabin, I should have held up my head with the rest. As I couldn't, I hide it. Do you understand that?"

"I am very sorry, sir," said Mark. "I didn't know you took it so much to heart as this comes to."

"Of course you didn't know," returned his master. "How should you know, unless I told you? It's no trial to *you*, Mark, to make yourself comfortable and to bustle about. It's as natural for you to do so under the circumstances as it is for me not to do so. Why, you don't suppose there is a living creature in this ship who can by possibility have half so much to undergo on board of her as *I* have? Do you?" he asked, sitting upright in his berth and looking at Mark, with an expression of great earnestness not unmixed with wonder.

Mark twisted his face into a tight knot, and with his head very much on one side pondered upon this question as if he felt it an extremely difficult one to answer. He was relieved from his embarrassment by Martin himself, who said, as he stretched himself upon his back again and resumed the book he had been reading:

"But what is the use of my putting such a case to you, when the very essence of what I have been saying is, that you cannot possibly understand it! Make me a little brandy-and-water, cold and very weak, and give me a biscuit, and tell your friend who is a nearer neighbour of ours than I could wish, to try and keep her children a little quieter tonight than she did last night; that's a good fellow."

Mr. Tapley set himself to obey these orders with great alacrity, and pending their execution, it may be presumed his flagging spirits revived.

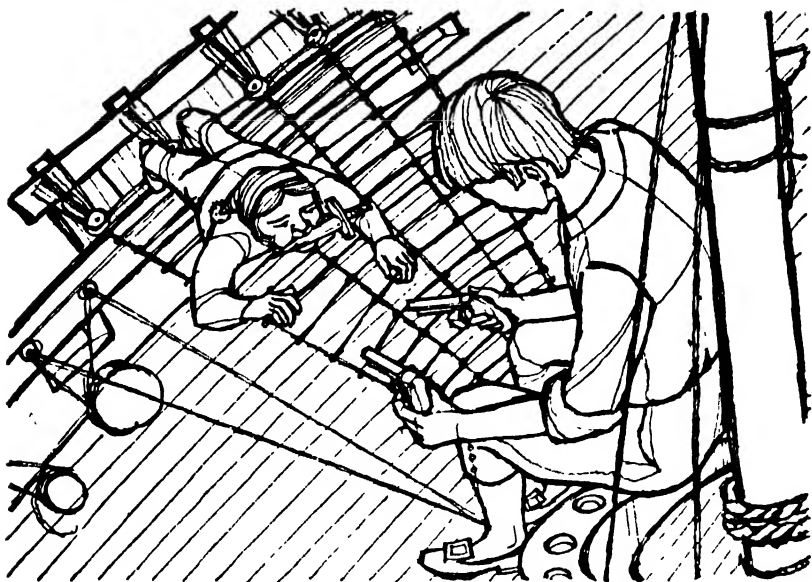
And now a general excitement began to prevail on board; and various predictions relative to the precise day, and even the precise hour at which they would reach New York, were freely broached. There was infinitely more crowding on deck and looking over the ship's side than there had been before; and an epidemic broke out for packing up things every morning, which required unpacking again every night. Those who had any letters to deliver, or any friends to meet, or any settled plans of going anywhere or doing anything, discussed their prospects a hundred times a day; and as this class of passengers was very small, and the number of those who had no prospects whatever was very large, there were plenty of listeners and few talkers. Those who had been ill all along, got well now, and those who had been well, got better. An American gentleman in the after-cabin, who had been wrapped up in fur and oilskin the whole passage, unexpectedly appeared in a very shiny, tall, black hat, and constantly overhauled a very little valise of pale leather, which contained his clothes, linen, brushes, shaving apparatus, books, trinkets, and other baggage. He likewise stuck his hands deep into his pockets, and walked the deck with his nostrils dilated, as already inhaling the air of Freedom which carries death to all tyrants, and can never (under any circumstances worth mentioning) be breathed by slaves. An English gentleman who was strongly suspected of having run away from a bank, with something in his possession belonging to its strong-box besides the key, grew eloquent upon the subject of the rights of man, and hummed the Marseillaise Hymn constantly. In a word, one great sensation pervaded the whole ship, and the soil of America lay close before them: so close at last, that, upon a certain starlight night, they took a pilot on board, and within a few hours afterwards lay to until the morning, awaiting the arrival of a steam-boat in which the passengers were to be conveyed ashore.

Off she came, soon after it was light next morning, and lying alongside an hour or more—during which period her very firemen were objects of hardly less interest and curiosity, than

if they had been so many angels, good or bad—took all her living freight aboard. Among them, Mark, who still had his friend and her three children under his close protection: and Martin, who had once more dressed himself in his usual attire, but wore a soiled, old cloak above his ordinary clothes, until such time as he should separate for ever from his late companions.

The steamer—which, with its machinery on deck, looked, as it worked its long slim legs, like some enormously magnified insect or antediluvian monster—dashed at great speed up a beautiful bay; and presently they saw some heights, and islands, and a long, flat, straggling city.

“And this,” said Mr. Tapley, looking far ahead, “is the Land of Liberty, is it? Very well. I’m agreeable. Any land will do for me, after so much water!”



## *The Jolly Roger Comes Down*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

JIM HAWKINS, who tells this story, is an English lad who had sailed in the schooner *Hispaniola* in search of buried treasure. The crew, under Long John Silver, mutinied when the schooner anchored off an island named on a secret chart, but Jim and others loyal to the captain escaped. When most of the mutineers had gone ashore Jim returned secretly to the schooner, determined to haul down the pirate flag flying from the masthead. But his daring led him into unexpected danger when he struck a bargain with Israel Hands, the rascally coxswain. How Jim and his friends finally overcame the mutiny and found the buried treasure is told in *Treasure Island*, from which this story is taken.

Suddenly the *Hispaniola* came right into the wind. The jibs behind me cracked aloud; the rudder slammed to; the whole

ship gave a sickening heave and shudder, and at the same moment the main-boom swung inboard, the sheet groaning in the blocks, and showed me the lee after-deck.

There were the two watchmen, sure enough: Redcap on his back, as stiff as a handspike, with his arms stretched out like those of a crucifix, and his teeth showing through his open lips; Israel Hands propped against the bulwarks, his chin on his chest, his hands lying open before him on the deck, his face as white, under its tan as a tallow candle.

For a while the ship kept bucking and sidling like a vicious horse, the sails filling, now on one tack, now on another, and the boom swinging to and fro till the mast groaned aloud under the strain.

At every jump of the schooner, Redcap slipped to and fro; but—what was ghastly to behold—neither his attitude nor his fixed teeth-disclosing grin was anyway disturbed by this rough usage. At every jump, too, Hands appeared still more to sink into himself and settle down upon the deck, his feet sliding ever the farther out, and the whole body canting towards the stern, so that his face became, little by little, hid from me; and at last I could see nothing beyond his ear and the frayed ringlet of one whisker.

At the same time, I observed, around both of them, splashes of dark blood upon the planks, and began to feel sure that they had killed each other in their drunken wrath.

While I was thus looking and wondering, in a calm moment, when the ship was still, Israel Hands turned partly round, with a low moan, writhed himself back to the position in which I had seen him first.

I walked aft until I reached the main-mast.

“Come aboard, Mr. Hands,” I said ironically.

He rolled his eyes round heavily; but he was too far gone to express surprise. All he could do was to utter one word, “Brandy”.

It occurred to me there was no time to lose; and, dodging the boom as it once more lurched across the deck, I slipped aft, and down the companion-stairs into the cabin.

It was such a scene of confusion as you can hardly fancy. All the lockfast places had been broken open in quest of the chart.

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The bulkheads, all painted in clear white, and beaded round with gilt, bore a pattern of dirty hands. Dozens of empty bottles clinked together in the corners to the rolling of the ship. One of the doctor's medical books lay open on the table, half of the leaves gutted out, I suppose, for pipe-lights. In the midst of all this the lamp still cast a smoky glow, obscure and brown as umber.

I went into the cellar; all the barrels were gone, and of the bottles a most surprising number had been drunk out and thrown away. Certainly, since the mutiny began, not a man of them could ever have been sober.

Foraging about I found a bottle with some brandy left, for Hands; and for myself I routed out some biscuit, some pickled fruits, a great bunch of raisins, and a piece of cheese. With these I came on deck, put down my own stock behind the rudder-head, and well out of the coxswain's reach, went forward to the water-beaker, and had a good, deep drink of water, and then, and not till then, gave Hands the brandy.

He must have drunk a gill before he took the bottle from his mouth.

"Aye," said he, "by thunder, but I wanted some o' that!"

I had sat down already in my own corner and begun to eat.

"Much hurt?" I asked him.

He grunted, or rather, I may say, he barked.

"If that doctor was aboard," he said, "I'd be right enough in a couple of turns; but I don't have no manner of luck, you see, and that's what's the matter with me. As for that swab, he's good and dead, he is," he added, indicating the man with the red cap. "He warn't no seaman, anyhow. And where mought you have come from?"

"Well," said I, "I've come aboard to take possession of this ship, Mr. Hands; and you'll please regard me as your captain until further notice."

He looked at me sourly enough, but said nothing. Some of the colour had come back into his cheeks, though he still looked very sick, and still continued to slip out and settle down as the ship banged about.

"By the bye," I continued, "I can't have these colours, Mr.

Hands; and, by your leave, I'll strike 'em. Better none than these."

And again dodging the boom, I ran to the colour lines, handed down their cursed black flag, and chucked it overboard.

"God save the King!" said I, waving my cap; "and there's an end to Captain Silver!"

He watched me keenly and slyly, his chin all the while on his breast.

"I reckon," he said at last—"I reckon, Cap'n Hawkins, you'll kind of want to get ashore, now. S'pose we talks."

"Why, yes," says I, "with all my heart, Mr. Hands. Say on." And I went back to my meal with a good appetite.

"This man," he began, nodding feebly at the corpse—"O'Brien were his name—a rank Irishman—this man and me got the canvas on her, meaning for to sail her back. Well, *he's* dead now, he is—as dead as bilge; and who's to sail this ship, I don't see. Without I gives you a hint you ain't that man, as far's I can tell. Now, look here, you gives me food and drink, and an old scarf or ankecher to tie my wound up, you do; and I'll tell you how to sail her; and that's about square all round, I take it."

Well, as it seemed to me, there was some sense in this. We struck our bargain on the spot. In three minutes I had the *Hispaniola* sailing easily before the wind along the coast of Treasure Island, with good hopes of turning the northern point ere noon, and beating down again as far as North Inlet before high water, when we might beach her safely, and wait till the subsiding tide permitted us to land.

Then I lashed the tiller and went below to my own chest, where I got a soft silk handkerchief of my mother's. With this, and with my aid, Hands bound up the great bleeding stab he had received in the thigh, and after he had eaten a little and had a swallow or two more of the brandy, he began to pick up visibly, sat straighter up, spoke louder and clearer, and looked in every way another man.

The breeze served us admirably. We skimmed before it like a bird, the coast of the island flashing by, and the view changing every minute. Soon we were past the high lands and bowling beside low, sandy country, sparsely dotted with dwarf-pines, and

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soon we were beyond that again, and had turned the corner of the rocky hill that ends the island on the north.

I was greatly elated with my new command, and pleased with the bright, sunshiny weather and these different prospects of the coast. I had now plenty of water and good things to eat. I should, I think, have had nothing left me to desire but for the eyes of the coxswain as they followed me derisively about the deck, and the odd smile that appeared continually on his face. It was a smile that had in it something both of pain and weakness—a haggard, old man's smile; but there was, besides that, a grain of derision, a shadow of treachery, in his expression as he craftily watched, and watched, and watched me at my work.

The wind, serving us to a desire, now hauled into the west. We could run so much the easier from the north-east corner of the island to the mouth of the North Inlet. Only, as we had no power to anchor, and dared not beach her till the tide had flowed a good deal farther, time hung on her hands. The coxswain told me how to lay the ship to; after a good many trials I succeeded, and we both sat in silence over another meal.

"Cap'n," said he, at length, with that same uncomfortable smile, "here's my old shipmate, O'Brien; s'pose you was to heave him overboard. I ain't partic'lar as a rule, and I don't take no blame for settling his hash; but I don't reckon him ornamental, now, do you?"

"I'm not strong enough, and I don't like the job; and there he lies, for me," said I.

"This here's an unlucky ship—this *Hispaniola*, Jim," he went on, blinking. "There's a power of men been killed in this *Hispaniola*—a sight o' poor seamen dead and gone since you and me took ship to Bristol. I never seen sich dirty luck, not I. There was this here O'Brien, now—he's dead, ain't he? Well, now, I'm no scholar, and you're a lad as can read and figure; and to put it straight, do you take it as a dead man is dead for good, or do he come alive again?"

"You can kill the body, Mr. Hands, but not the spirit; you must know that already," I replied.

"Ah!" says he. "And now I'll take it kind if you'd step down into that there cabin and get me a—well, a—shiver my timbers!

I can't hit the name on't; well, you get me a bottle of wine, Jim—this here brandy's too strong for my head."

Now, the coxswain's hesitation seemed to be unnatural; and as for the notion of his preferring wine to brandy, I entirely disbelieved it. The whole story was a pretext. He wanted me to leave the deck—so much was plain; but with what purpose I could in no way imagine. His eyes never met mine; they kept wandering to and fro, up and down, now with a look to the sky, now with a flitting glance upon the dead O'Brien. All the time he kept smiling, and putting his tongue out in the most guilty, embarrassed manner, so that a child could have told that he was bent on some deception. I was prompt with my answer, however, for I saw where my advantage lay; and that with a fellow so densely stupid I could easily conceal my suspicions to the end.

"Some wine?" I said. "Far better. Will you have white or red?"

"Well, I reckon it's about the blessed same to me, shipmate," he replied; "so it's strong and plenty of it, what's the odds?"

"All right," I answered. "I'll bring you port, Mr. Hands. But I'll have to dig for it."

With that I scuttled down the companion with all the noise I could, slipped off my shoes, ran quietly along the sparred gallery, mounted the forecastle ladder, and popped my head out of the fore companion. I knew he would not expect to see me there; yet I took every precaution possible; and certainly the worst of my suspicions proved too true.

He had risen from his position to his hands and knees; and, though his leg obviously hurt him pretty sharply when he moved—for I could hear him stifle a groan—yet it was at a good, rattling rate that he trailed himself across the deck. In half a minute he had reached the port scuppers, and picked, out of a coil of rope, a long knife, or rather a short dirk. He looked upon it for a moment, thrusting forth his under jaw, tried the point upon his hand, and then, hastily concealing it in the bosom of his jacket, trundled back again into his old place against the bulwark.

This was all that I required to know. Israel could move about; he was now armed; and if he had been at so much trouble to

get rid of me, it was plain that I was meant to be the victim.

Yet I felt sure that I could trust him in one point, since in that our interests jumped together, and that was in the disposition of the schooner. We both desired to have her stranded safe enough in a sheltered place, and so that, when the time came, she could be got off again with as little labour and danger as might be; and until that was done, I considered that my life would certainly be spared.

While I was thus turning the business over in my mind, I had not been idle with my body. I had stolen back to the cabin, slipped once more into my shoes, and laid my hand at random on a bottle of wine, and now, with this for an excuse, I made my reappearance on the deck.

Hands lay as I had left him, all fallen together in a bundle, and with his eyelids lowered, as though he were too weak to bear the light. He looked up, however, at my coming, knocked the neck off the bottle, like a man who had done the same thing often, and took a good swig, with his favourite toast of "Here's luck!" Then he lay quiet for a little, and then, pulling out a stick of tobacco, begged me to cut him a quid.

"Cut me a junk o' that," says he, "for I haven't no knife, and hardly strength enough, so be as I had. Ah, Jim, Jim, I reckon I've missed stays! Cut me a quid, as'll likely be the last, lad; for I'm for my long home, and no mistake."

"Well," said I, "I'll cut you some tobacco; but if I were you and thought myself so badly, I would go to my prayers, like a Christian man."

I spoke with a little heat, thinking of the dirk he had hidden in his pocket, and designed, in his ill thoughts, to end me with. He, for his part, took a great draught of the wine, and spoke with the most unusual solemnity.

"For thirty years," he said, "I've sailed the seas, and seen good and bad, better and worse, fair weather and foul, provisions running out, knives going, and what not. Well, now I tell you, I never seen good come o' goodness yet. Him as strikes first is my fancy; dead men don't bite; them's my views—amen, so be it. And now, you look here," he added, suddenly changing his tone, "we've had about enough of this foolery. The tide's made good enough by now. You just take my

orders, Cap'n Hawkins, and we'll sail slap in and be done with it."

All told, we had scarce two miles to run; but the navigation was delicate, the entrance to this northern anchorage was not only narrow and shoal, but lay east and west, so that the schooner must be nicely handled to be got in. I think I was a good, prompt subaltern, and I am very sure that Hands was an excellent pilot; for we went about and about, and dodged in, shaving the banks, with a certainty and a neatness that were a pleasure to behold.

Scarcely had we passed the heads before the land closed around us. The shores of North Inlet were as thickly wooded as those of the southern anchorage; but the space was longer and narrower, and more like, what in truth it was, the estuary of a river. Right before us, at the southern end, we saw the wreck of a ship in the last stages of dilapidation. It had been a great vessel of three masts, but had lain so long exposed to the injuries of the weather that it was hung about with great webs of dripping seaweed, and on the deck of it shore bushes had taken root, and now flourished thick with flowers. It was a sad sight, but it showed us that the anchorage was calm.

"Now," said Hands, "look here; there's a pet bit for to beach a ship in. Fine flat sand, never a catspaw, trees all round of it, and flowers a-blowing like a garding on that old ship."

"And once beached," I inquired, "how shall we get her off again?"

"Why so," he replied: "you take a line ashore there on the other side at low water: take a turn about one o' them big pines; bring it back, take a turn round the capstan, and lie-to for the tide. Come high water, all hands take a pull upon the line, and off she comes as sweet as natur'. And now, boy, you stand by. We're near the bit now, and she's too much way on her. Starboard a little—so—steady—starboard—larboard a little—steady—steady!"

So he issued his commands, which I breathlessly obeyed, till, all of a sudden, he cried, "Now, my hearty, luff!" And I put the helm hard up, and the *Hispaniola* swung round rapidly, and ran stem on for the low wooded shore.

The excitement of these last manoeuvres had somewhat interfered with the watch I had kept hitherto, sharply enough,

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upon the coxswain. Even then I was still so much interested waiting for the ship to touch, that I had quite forgot the peril that hung over my head, and stood craning over the starboard bulwarks and watching the ripples spreading wide before the bows. I might have fallen without a struggle for my life, had not a sudden disquietude seized upon me, and made me turn my head. Perhaps I had heard a creak, or seen his shadow moving with the tail of my eye; perhaps it was an instinct like a cat's; but, sure enough, when I looked round, there was Hands already halfway towards me, with the dirk in his right hand.

• We must both have cried out aloud when our eyes met; but while mine was the shrill cry of terror, his was a roar of fury like a charging bull's. At the same instant he threw himself forward, and I leapt sideways towards the bows. As I did so, I left hold of the tiller, which sprang sharp to leeward; and I think this saved my life, for it struck Hands across the chest, and stopped him, for the moment, dead.

Before he could recover, I was safe out of the corner where he had me trapped, with all the deck to dodge about. Just forward of the main-mast I stopped, drew a pistol from my pocket, took a cool aim, though he had already turned and was once more coming directly after me, and drew the trigger. The hammer fell, but there followed neither flash nor sound; the priming was useless with sea water. I cursed myself for my neglect. Why had not I, long before, reprimed and reloaded my only weapons? Then I should not have been, as now, a mere fleeing sheep before this butcher.

Wounded as he was, it was wonderful how fast he could move, his grizzled hair tumbling over his face, and his face itself as red as a red ensign with his haste and fury. I had no time to try my other pistol, nor, indeed, much inclination, for I was sure it would be useless. One thing I saw plainly: I must not simply retreat before him, or he would speedily hold me boxed into the bows, as a moment since he had so nearly boxed me in the stern. Once so caught, and nine or ten inches of the dirk would be my last experience on this side of eternity. I placed my palms against the main-mast, which was of a goodish bigness, and waited, every nerve upon the stretch.

Seeing that I meant to dodge, he also paused; and a moment or two passed in feints on his part, and corresponding movements upon mine. It was such a game as I had often played at home about the rocks of Black Hill Cove; but never before, you may be sure, with such a wildly beating heart as now. Still, as I say, it was a boy's game, and I thought I could hold my own at it, against an elderly seaman with a wounded thigh. Indeed, my courage had begun to rise so high, that I allowed myself a few darting thoughts on what would be the end of the affair; and while I saw certainly that I could spin it out for long, I saw no hope of any ultimate escape.

Well, while things stood thus, suddenly the *Hispaniola* struck, staggered, ground for an instant in the sand, and then, swift as a blow, canted over to the port side, till the deck stood at an angle of forty-five degrees, and about a puncheon of water splashed into the scupper holes, and lay, in a pool, between the deck and bulwark.

We were both of us capsized in a second, and both of us rolled almost together, into the scuppers; the dead Redcap, with his arms still spread out, tumbling stiffly after us. So near were we indeed, that my head came against the coxswain's foot with a crack that made my teeth rattle. Blow and all, I was the first afoot again; for Hands had got involved with the dead body. The sudden canting of the ship had made the deck no place for running on; I had to find some new way of escape, and that upon the instant, for my foe was almost touching me. Quick as thought I sprang into the mizzen shrouds, rattled up hand over hand, and did not draw a breath till I was seated on the cross-trees.

I had been saved by being prompt; the dirk had struck not half a foot below me, as I pursued my upward flight; and there stood Israel Hands with his mouth open and his face upturned to mine, a perfect statue of surprise and disappointment.

Now that I had a moment to myself, I lost no time in changing the priming of my pistol, and then, having one ready for service, and to make assurance doubly sure, I proceeded to draw the load of the other, and recharge it afresh from the beginning.

My new employment struck Hands all of a heap; he began to see the dice going against him; and after an obvious hesi-

tation, he also hauled himself heavily into the shrouds, and, with the dirk in his teeth, began slowly and painfully to mount. It cost him no end of time and groans to haul his wounded leg behind him; and I had quietly finished my arrangements before he was much more than a third of the way up. Then, with a pistol in either hand, I addressed him.

"One more step, Mr. Hands," said I, "and I'll blow your brains out! Dead men don't bite, you know," I added, with a chuckle.

He stopped instantly. I could see by the working of his face that he was trying to think, and the process was so slow and laborious that, in my new-found security, I laughed aloud. At last, with a swallow or two, he spoke, his face still wearing the same expression of extreme perplexity. In order to speak he had to take the dagger from his mouth, but, in all else, he remained unmoved.

"Jim," says he, "I reckon we're fouled, you and me, and we'll have to sign articles. I'd have had you but for that there lurch; but I don't have no luck, not I; and I reckon I'll have to strike, which comes hard, you see, for a master mariner to a ship's younker like you, Jim."

I was drinking in his words and smiling away, as conceited as a cock upon a wall, when, all in a breath, back went his right hand over his shoulder. Something sang like an arrow through the air: I felt a blow and then a sharp pang, and there I was pinned by the shoulder to the mast. In the horrid pain and surprise of the moment—I scarce can say it was by my own volition, and I am sure it was without a conscious aim—both my pistols went off, and both escaped out of my hands. They did not fall alone; with a choked cry, the coxswain loosed his grip upon the shrouds, and plunged head first into the water.

Owing to the cant of the vessel, the masts hung far out over the water, and from my perch on the cross-trees I had nothing below me but the surface of the bay. Hands, who was not so far up, was in consequence, nearer to the ship, and fell between me and the bulwarks. He rose once to the surface, and then sank again for good. As the water settled, I could see him lying huddled together on the clean, bright sand in the shadow of the vessel's side. A fish or two whipped past his body. Sometimes,

by the quivering of the water, he appeared to move a little, as if he were trying to rise. But he was dead enough, for all that, being both shot and drowned, and was food for fish in the very place where he had designed my slaughter.

I was no sooner certain of this than I began to feel sick, faint, and terrified. The hot blood was running over my back and chest. The dirk, where it had pinned my shoulder to the mast, seemed to burn like a hot iron; yet it was not so much these real sufferings that distressed me, for these, it seemed to me, I could bear without a murmur; it was the horror I had upon my mind of falling from the cross-trees into that still green water, beside the body of the coxswain.

I clung with both hands till my nails ached, and I shut my eyes as if to cover up the peril. Gradually my mind came back again, my pulses quieted down to a more natural time, and I was once more in possession of myself.

It was my first thought to pluck forth the dirk; but either it stuck too hard or my nerve failed me; and I desisted with a violent shudder. Oddly enough, that very shudder did the business. The knife, in fact, had come the nearest in the world to missing me altogether; it held me by a mere pinch of skin, and this the shudder tore away. The blood ran down the faster, to be sure; but I was my own master again, and only tacked to the mast by my coat and shirt.

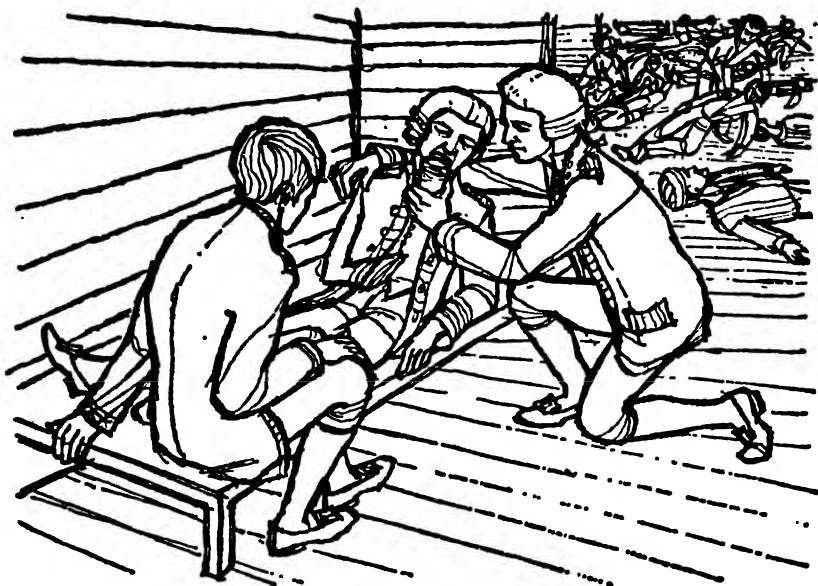
These last I broke through with a sudden jerk, and then regained the deck by the starboard shrouds.

I went below, and did what I could for my wound; it pained me a good deal, and still bled freely; but it was neither deep nor dangerous, nor did it greatly gall me when I used my arm. Then I looked around me, and as the ship was now, in a sense, my own, I began to think of clearing it from its last passenger—the dead man, O'Brien.

He had pitched, as I have said, against the bulwarks, where he lay like some horrible, ungainly sort of puppet; life-size, indeed, but how different from life's colour or life's comeliness! In that position, I could easily have my way with him; and as the habit of tragical adventures had worn off almost all my terror for the dead, I took him by the waist as if he had been a sack of bran, and, with one good heave, tumbled him over-

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board. He went in with a sounding plunge; the red cap came off, and remained floating on the surface; and as soon as the splash subsided, I could see him and Israel lying side by side, both wavering with the tremulous movement of the water. O'Brien, though still quite a young man, was very bald. There he lay, with that bald head across the knees of the man who had killed him, and the quick fishes steering to and fro over both.



## *The Nelson Touch*

ROBERT SOUTHEY

ON the morning of October 21, 1805, Admiral Lord Nelson and the French Admiral Villeneuve, who was in command of the combined French and Spanish Fleets, faced each other off Trafalgar. Each realized that, upon the outcome of the battle, hung the fate of Europe. For if the French destroyed the British, then Villeneuve's master, Napoleon, could undertake the invasion of England, with every hope of succeeding where, more than two hundred years before, the might of Spain had failed. With England conquered, resistance to Napoleon in Europe must collapse. But on that memorable day the enemy felt once more the Nelson touch—for the last time. When the sun went down Napoleon's projected invasion of England was a dictator's faded dream. This narrative is taken from *Life of Nelson*, first published in 1813, the year in which its author was made Poet Laureate.

On the 9th Nelson sent Collingwood what he called, in his diary, the Nelson touch. "I send you," said he, "my plan of attack, as far as a man dare venture to guess at the very uncertain position the enemy may be found in: but it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgment for carrying them into effect. We can, my dear Coll, have no little jealousies. We have only one great object in view, that of annihilating our enemies, and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence in another than I have in you; and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend Nelson and Bronte." The order of sailing was to be the order of battle: the fleet in two lines, with an advanced squadron of eight of the fastest sailing two-deckers. The second in command, having the entire direction of his line, was to break through the enemy, about the twelfth ship from their rear: he would lead through the centre, and the advanced squadron was to cut off three or four ahead of the centre. This plan was to be adapted to the strength of the enemy, so that they should always be one-fourth superior to those whom they cut off. Nelson said, "That his admirals and captains, knowing his precise object to be that of a close and decisive action, would supply any deficiency of signals, and act accordingly. In case signals cannot be seen or clearly understood, no captain can do wrong if he places his ship alongside that of the enemy." One of the last orders of this admirable man was, that the name and family of every officer, seaman, and marine, who might be killed or wounded in action, should be, as soon as possible, returned to him, in order to be transmitted to the chairman of the Patriotic Fund, that the case might be taken into consideration, for the benefit of the sufferer or his family.

About half-past nine in the morning of the 19th, the *Mars*, being the nearest to the fleet of the ships which formed the line of communication with the frigates in shore, repeated the signal that the enemy were coming out of port. The wind was at this time very light, with partial breezes, mostly from the S.S.W. Nelson ordered the signal to be made for a chase in the south-east quarter. About two, the repeating ships announced that the enemy were at sea. All night the British fleet con-

tinued under all sail, steering to the south-east. At daybreak they were in the entrance of the Straits, but the enemy were not in sight. About seven, one of the frigates made signal that the enemy were bearing north. Upon this the *Victory* hove to; and shortly afterwards Nelson made sail again to the northward. In the afternoon the wind blew fresh from the south-west, and the English began to fear that the foe might be forced to return to port. A little before sunset, however, Blackwood, in the *Euryalus*, telegraphed that they appeared determined to go to the westward—"And that," said the admiral in his diary, "They shall not do, if it is in the power of Nelson and Bronte to prevent them." Nelson had signified to Blackwood, that he depended upon him to keep sight of the enemy. They were observed so well, that all their motions were made known to him; and, as they wore twice, he inferred that they were aiming to keep the port of Cadiz open, and would retreat there as soon as they saw the British fleet: for this reason he was very careful not to approach near enough to be seen by them during the night. At daybreak the combined fleets were distinctly seen from the *Victory's* deck, formed in a close line of battle ahead, on the starboard tack, about twelve miles to leeward, and standing to the south. Our fleet consisted of twenty-seven sail of the line and four frigates; theirs of thirty-three, and seven large frigates.

Soon after daylight Nelson came upon deck. The 21st of October was a festiyal in his family; because on that day his uncle, Captain Suckling, in the *Dreadnought*, with two other line of battle ships, had beaten off a French squadron of four sail of the line and three frigates. Nelson, with that sort of superstition from which few persons are entirely exempt, had more than once expressed his persuasion that this was to be the day of his battle also; and he was well pleased at seeing his prediction about to be verified. The wind was now from the west—light breezes, with a long heavy swell. Signal was made to bear down upon the enemy in two lines; and the fleet set all sail. Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, led the lee-line of thirteen ships; the *Victory* led the weatherline of fourteen. Having seen that all was as it should be, Nelson retired to his cabin, and wrote this prayer:

“May the Great God, whom I worship, grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory; and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet! For myself individually, I commit my life to Him that made me, and may His blessing alight on my endeavours for serving my country faithfully! To Him I resign myself, and the just cause which is intrusted to me to defend. Amen, Amen, Amen.”

Blackwood went on board the *Victory* about six. He found him in good spirits, but very calm; not in that exhilaration which he had felt upon entering into battle at Aboukir and Copenhagen; he knew that his own life would be particularly aimed at, and seems to have looked for death with almost as sure an expectation as for victory. His whole attention was fixed upon the enemy. They tacked to the northward, and formed their line on the larboard tack; thus bringing the shoals of Trafalgar and St. Pedro under the lee of the British, and keeping the port of Cadiz open for themselves. This was judiciously done: and Nelson, aware of all the advantages which it gave them, made signal to prepare to anchor.

Villeneuve was a skilful seaman; worthy of serving a better master and a better cause. His plan of defence was as well conceived, and as original, as the plan of attack. He formed the fleet in a double line, every alternate ship being about a cable's length to windward of her second ahead and astern. Nelson, certain of a triumphant issue to the day, asked Blackwood what he should consider as a victory. That officer answered, that, considering the handsome way in which battle was offered by the enemy, their apparent determination for a fair trial of strength, and the situation of the land, he thought it would be a glorious result if fourteen were captured. He replied: “I shall not be satisfied with less than twenty.” Soon afterwards he asked him if he did not think there was a signal wanting. Captain Blackwood made answer that he thought the whole fleet seemed very clearly to understand what they were about. These words were scarcely spoken before that signal was made, which will be remembered as long as the language, or even

the memory, of England shall endure—Nelson's last signal:—"England expects every man to do his duty!" It was received throughout the fleet, with a shout of answering acclamation, made sublime by the spirit which it breathed and the feeling which it expressed. "Now," said Lord Nelson, "I can do no more. We must trust to the Great Disposer of all events, and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty."

He wore that day, as usual, his admiral's frock coat, bearing on the left breast four stars of the different orders with which he was invested. Ornaments which rendered him so conspicuous a mark for the enemy, were beheld with ominous apprehensions by his officers. It was known that there were riflemen on board the French ships, and it could not be doubted but that his life would be particularly aimed at. They communicated their fears to each other; and the surgeon, Mr. Beatty, spoke to the chaplain, Dr. Scott, and to Mr. Scott, the public secretary, desiring that some person would entreat him to change his dress, or cover the stars: but they knew that such a request would highly displease him. "In honour I gained them," he had said when such a thing had been hinted to him formerly, "and in honour I will die with them." Mr. Beatty, however, would not have been deterred by any fear of exciting his displeasure, from speaking to him himself upon a subject in which the weal of England as well as the life of Nelson was concerned, but he was ordered from the deck before he could find an opportunity. This was a point upon which Nelson's officers knew that it was hopeless to remonstrate or reason with him; but both Blackwood, and his own captain, Hardy, represented to him how advantageous to the fleet it would be for him to keep out of action as long as possible; and he consented at last to let the *Leviathan* and the *Téméraire*, which were sailing abreast of the *Victory*, be ordered to pass ahead. Yet even here the last infirmity of this noble mind was indulged; for these ships could not pass ahead if the *Victory* continued to carry all her sail; and so far was Nelson from shortening sail, that it was evident he took pleasure in pressing on, and rendering it impossible for them to obey his own orders. A long swell was setting into the Bay of Cadiz: our ships, crowding all

sail, moved majestically before it, with light winds from the south-west. The sun shone on the sails of the enemy; and their well-formed line, with their numerous three-deckers, made an appearance which any other assailants would have thought formidable; but the British sailors only admired the beauty and the splendour of the spectacle; and, in full confidence of winning what they saw, remarked to each other, what a fine sight yonder ships would make at Spithead!

The French admiral, from the *Bucentaure*, beheld the new manner in which his enemy was advancing, Nelson and Collingwood each leading his line; and, pointing them out to his officers, he is said to have exclaimed, that such conduct could not fail to be successful. Yet Villeneuve had made his own dispositions with the utmost skill, and the fleets under his command waited for the attack with perfect coolness. Ten minutes before twelve they opened their fire. Eight or nine of the ships immediately ahead of the *Victory*, and across her bows, fired single guns at her, to ascertain whether she was yet within their range. As soon as Nelson perceived that their shot passed over him, he desired Blackwood and Captain Prowse, of the *Sirius*, to repair to their respective frigates; and, on their way, to tell all the captains of the line of battle ships that he depended on their exertions; and that, if by the prescribed mode of attack they found it impracticable to get into action immediately, they might adopt whatever they thought best, provided it led them quickly and closely alongside an enemy. As they were standing on the front of the poop, Blackwood took him by the hand, saying, he hoped soon to return and find him in possession of twenty prizes. He replied: "God bless you, Blackwood! I shall never see you again."

Nelson's column was steered about two points more to the north than Collingwood's, in order to cut off the enemy's escape into Cadiz: the lee-line, therefore, was first engaged. "See," cried Nelson, pointing to the *Royal Sovereign*, as she steered right for the centre of the enemy's line, cut through it astern of the *Santa Anna*, three-decker, and engaged her at the muzzle of her guns on the starboard side: "see how that noble fellow, Collingwood, carries his ship into action!" Collingwood, delighted at being first in the heat of the fire, and knowing the

feelings of his commander and old friend, turned to his captain, and exclaimed, "Rotherham, what would Nelson give to be here!" Both these brave officers, perhaps, at this moment thought of Nelson with gratitude, for a circumstance which had occurred on the preceding day. Admiral Collingwood, with some of the captains, having gone on board the *Victory* to receive instructions, Nelson inquired of him where his captain was? and was told, in reply, that they were not upon good terms with each other. "Terms!" said Nelson;—"good terms with each other!" Immediately he sent a boat for Captain Rotherham; led him, as soon as he arrived, to Collingwood, and saying, "Look, yonder are the enemy!" bade them "shake hands like Englishmen."

The enemy continued to fire a gun at a time at the *Victory*, till they saw that a shot had passed through her main-topgallant-sail; then they opened their broadsides, aiming chiefly at her rigging, in the hope of disabling her before she could close with them. Nelson, as usual, had hoisted several flags, lest one should be shot away. The enemy showed no colours till late in the action, when they began to feel the necessity of having them to strike. For this reason, the *Santissima Trinidad*, Nelson's old acquaintance, as he used to call her, was distinguishable only by her four decks; and to the bow of this opponent he ordered the *Victory* to be stered. Meantime an incessant raking fire was kept up upon the *Victory*. The Admiral's secretary was one of the first who fell: he was killed by a cannon-shot, while conversing with Hardy. Captain Adair, of the marines, with the help of a sailor, endeavoured to remove the body from Nelson's sight, who had a great regard for Mr. Scott; but he anxiously asked, "Is that poor Scott that's gone?" and being informed that it was indeed so, exclaimed, "Poor fellow!" Presently a double-headed shot struck a party of marines, who were drawn up on the poop, and killed eight of them: upon which Nelson immediately desired Captain Adair to disperse his men round the ship, that they might not suffer so much from being together. A few minutes afterwards a shot struck the fore brace bits on the quarter-deck, and passed between Nelson and Hardy, a splinter from the bit tearing off Hardy's buckle and bruising his foot. Both stopped, and looked anxiously at each other, each

supposing the other to be wounded. Nelson then smiled, and said, "This is too warm work, Hardy, to last long."

The *Victory* had not yet returned a single gun: fifty of her men had been by this time killed or wounded, and her main-top-mast, with all her studding sails and their booms, shot away. Nelson declared that, in all his battles, he had seen nothing which surpassed the cool courage of his crew on this occasion. At four minutes after twelve she opened her fire from both sides of her deck. It was not possible to break the enemy's line without running on board one of their ships: Hardy informed him of this, and asked which he would prefer. Nelson replied: "Take your choice, Hardy, it does not signify much." The master was then ordered to put the helm to port, and the *Victory* ran on board the *Redoutable*, just as her tiller ropes were shot away. The French ship received her with a broadside; then instantly let down her lower-deck ports, for fear of being boarded through them, and never afterwards fired a great gun during the action. Her tops, like those of all the enemy's ships, were filled with riflemen. Nelson never placed musketry in his tops; he had a strong dislike to the practice, not merely because it endangers setting fire to the sails, but also because it is a murderous sort of warfare, by which individuals may suffer, and a commander, now and then, be picked off, but which never can decide the fate of a general engagement.

Captain Harvey, in the *Téméraire*, fell on board the *Redoutable* on the other side. Another enemy was in like manner on board the *Téméraire*: so that these four ships formed as compact a tier as if they had been moored together, their heads lying all the same way. The lieutenants of the *Victory*, seeing this, depressed their guns of the middle and lower decks, and fired with a diminished charge, lest the shot should pass through, and injure the *Téméraire*. And because there was danger that the *Redoutable* might take fire from the lower-deck guns, the muzzles of which touched her side when they were run out, the fireman of each gun stood ready with a bucket of water, which, as soon as the gun was discharged, he dashed into the hole made by the shot. An incessant fire was kept up from the *Victory* from both sides; her larboard guns playing upon the *Bucentaure* and the huge *Santissima Trinidad*.

It had been part of Nelson's prayer that the British fleet might be distinguished by humanity in the victory which he expected. Setting an example himself, he twice gave orders to cease firing upon the *Redoubtable*, supposing that she had struck, because her great guns were silent; for, as she carried no flag, there was no means of instantly ascertaining the fact. From this ship, which he had thus twice spared, he received his death. A ball fired from her mizen-top, which, in the then situation of the two vessels, was not more than fifteen yards from that part of the deck where he was standing, struck the epaulette on his left shoulder—about a quarter after one, just in the heat of the action. He fell upon his face, on the spot which was covered with his poor secretary's blood. Hardy, who was a few steps from him, turning round, saw three men raising him up. "They have done for me at last, Hardy," said he. "I hope not!" cried Hardy. "Yes," he replied; "my back bone is shot through." Yet even now, not for a moment losing his presence of mind, he observed, as they were carrying him down the ladder, that the tiller ropes, which had been shot away, were not yet replaced, and ordered that new ones should be rove immediately:—then, that he might not be seen by the crew, he took out his handkerchief, and covered his face and his stars.—Had he but concealed these badges of honour from the enemy, England, perhaps, would not have had cause to receive with sorrow the news of the battle of Trafalgar.

The cockpit was crowded with wounded and dying men, over whose bodies he was with some difficulty conveyed, and laid upon a pallet in the midshipmen's berth. It was soon perceived, upon examination, that the wound was mortal. This, however, was concealed from all, except Captain Hardy, the chaplain, and the medical attendants. He himself being certain, from the sensation in his back, and the gush of blood which he felt momentarily within his breast, that no human care could avail him, insisted that the surgeon should leave him, and attend to those to whom he might be useful: "For," said he, "you can do nothing for me." All that could be done was to fan him with paper, and frequently to give him lemonade, to alleviate his intense thirst. He was in great pain, and expressed much anxiety for the event of the action, which now

began to declare itself. As often as a ship struck the crew of the *Victory* hurraed; and at every hurra a visible expression of joy gleamed in the eyes, and marked the countenance, of the dying hero. But he became impatient to see Captain Hardy; and as that officer, though often sent for, could not leave the deck, Nelson feared that some fatal cause prevented him, and repeatedly cried: "Will no one bring Hardy to me? He must be killed! He is surely dead!"—An hour and ten minutes elapsed, from the time when Nelson received his wound, before Hardy could come to him. They shook hands in silence; Hardy in vain struggling to suppress the feelings of that most painful and yet sublimest moment. "Well, Hardy," said Nelson, "how goes the day with us?"—"Very well," replied Hardy; "ten ships have struck, but five of their van have tacked, and show an intention of bearing down upon the *Victory*. I have called two or three of our fresh ships round, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing."—"I hope," said Nelson, "none of our ships have struck?" Hardy answered, "There was no fear of that." Then, and not till then, Nelson spoke of himself. "I am a dead man, Hardy," said he; "I am going fast:—it will be all over with me soon. Come nearer to me." Hardy observed, that he hoped Mr. Beatty could yet hold out some prospect of life. "Oh no!" he replied; "it is impossible. My back is shot through. Beatty will tell you so." Captain Hardy then, once more, shook hands with him; and, with a heart almost bursting, hastened upon deck.

By this time all feeling below the breast was gone, and Nelson, having made the surgeon ascertain this, said to him: "You know I am gone. I know it. I feel something rising in my breast"—putting his hand on his left side—"which tells me so." And upon Beatty's inquiring whether his pain was very great, he replied, "So great, that he wished he was dead. Yet," said he, in a lower voice, "one would like to live a little longer too!" Captain Hardy, some fifty minutes after he had left the cockpit, returned; and, again taking the hand of his dying friend and commander, congratulated him on having gained a complete victory. How many of the enemy were taken he did not know, as it was impossible to perceive them distinctly—but fourteen or fifteen at least. "That's well," cried Nelson; "but I bargained

for twenty." And then, in a stronger voice, he said, "Anchor, Hardy; anchor." Hardy, upon this, hinted that Admiral Collingwood would take upon himself the direction of affairs. "Not while I live, Hardy!" said the dying Nelson, ineffectually endeavouring to raise himself from the bed: "do you anchor." His previous order for preparing to anchor had shown how clearly he foresaw the necessity of this. Presently, calling Hardy back, he said to him, in a low voice, "Don't throw me overboard"; and he desired that he might be buried by his parents, unless it should please the king to order otherwise. "Kiss me, Hardy," said he. Hardy knelt down, and kissed his cheek: and Nelson said, "Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty." Hardy stood over him in silence for a moment or two, then knelt again, and kissed his forehead. "Who is that?" said Nelson; and being informed, he replied, "God bless you, Hardy." And Hardy then left him—for ever.

Nelson now desired to be turned upon his right side, and said: "I wish I had not left the deck; for I shall soon be gone." Death was, indeed, rapidly approaching. He said to the chaplain: "Doctor, I have *not* been a *great* sinner." His articulation now became difficult; but he was distinctly heard to say, "Thank God, I have done my duty!" These words he had repeatedly pronounced; and they were the last words he uttered. He expired at thirty minutes after four—three hours and a quarter after he had received his wound.



## *A Petticoat Ensign*

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

JACK EASY, a midshipman from the sloop *Harpy*, is in charge of a captured prize. The crew mutiny and go ashore, leaving Jack alone save for Mesty, his Negro servant, who had once been a slave. Jack waits offshore until the mutineers, whose leader has been killed by a shark, come to their senses. When they do Jack starts back to find the *Harpy*, whose officers and crew believe him dead. His return coincides with fresh action by the *Harpy* against the Spaniards. After hoisting a most unusual ensign Jack is able to make a dramatic contribution to the *Harpy's* fight, and then sets out to keep his word to the scared mutineers. Jack's further adventures are related in *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, from which this story is taken.

"What that?" cried Mesty, looking out of the cabin window—"Ah! d—n drunken dogs—they set fire to tent."

Jack looked, and perceived that the tent on shore was in flames.

"I tink these cold nights cool their courage, anyhow," observed Mesty—"Massa Easy, you see they soon ask permission to come on board."

Jack thought so too, and was most anxious to be off; for, on looking into the lockers in the state-room, he had found a chart of the Mediterranean, which he had studied very attentively—he had found out the rock of Gibraltar, and had traced the *Harpy's* course up to Cape de Gatte, and thence to Tarragona—and, after a while, had summoned Mesty to a cabinet council.

"See, Mesty," said Jack, "I begin to make it out, here is Gibraltar, and Cape de Gatte, and Tarragona—it was here—about we were when we took the ship, and, if you recollect, we had passed Cape de Gatte two days before we were blown off from the land, so that we had gone about twelve inches, and had only four more to go."

"Yes, Massa Easy, I see all dat."

"Well, then, we were blown off-shore by the wind, and must of course have come down this way; and here you see are three little islands, called Zaffarine Islands, and with no names of towns upon them, and therefore uninhabited; and you see they lie just like the islands we are anchored among now—we must be at the Zaffarine Islands—and only six inches from Gibraltar."

"I see, Massa Easy, dat all right—but six debbelish long inches."

"Now, Mesty, you know the compass on deck has a flourishing thing for the north point—and here is a compass with a north point also. Now the north point from the Zaffarine Islands leads out to the Spanish coast again, and Gibraltar lies five or six points of the compass to this side of it—if we steer that way we shall get to Gibraltar."

"All right, Massa Easy," replied Mesty, and Jack was right, with the exception of the variation, which he knew nothing about.

To make sure, Jack brought one of the compasses down from deck, and compared them. He then lifted off the glass, counted the points of the compass to the westward, and marked the

corresponding one on the binnacle compass with his pen.

"There," said he, "that is the way to Gibraltar, and as soon as the mutiny is quelled, and the wind is fair, I'll be off."

A few more days passed, and, as was expected, the mutineers could hold out no longer. In the first place, they had put in the spile of the second cask of wine so loosely when they were tipsy that it dropped out, and all the wine ran out, so that there had been none left for three or four days; in the next their fuel had long been expended, and they had latterly eaten their meat raw: the loss of their tent, which had been fired by their carelessness, had been followed by four days and nights of continual rain. Everything they had had been soaked through and through, and they were worn out, shivering with cold, and starving. Hanging they thought better than dying by inches from starvation; and yielding to the imperious demands of hunger, they came down to the beach, abreast of the ship, and dropped down on their knees.

"I tell you so, Massa Easy," said Mesty: "d—n rascals, they forget they come down fire musket at us every day: by all de powers, Mesty not forget it."

"Ship ahoy!" cried one of the men on shore.

"What do you want?" replied Jack.

"Have pity on us, sir—mercy!" exclaimed the other men, "we will return to our duty."

"Debble doubt 'em!"

"What shall I say, Mesty?"

"Tell 'em no, first, Massa Easy—tell 'em to starve and be d—d."

"I cannot take mutineers on board," replied Jack.

"Well, then, our blood be on your hands, Mr. Easy," replied the first man who had spoken. "If we are to die, it must not be by inches—if you will not take us, the sharks shall—it is but a crunch, and all is over. What do you say, my lads? let's all rush in together: good-bye, Mr. Easy, I hope you'll forgive us when we're dead: it was all that rascal Johnson, the coxswain, who persuaded us. Come, my lads, it's no use thinking of it, the sooner done the better—let us shake hands, and then make one run of it."

It appeared that the poor fellows had already made up their

minds to do this, if our hero, persuaded by Mesty, had refused to take them on board; they shook hands all round, and then walking a few yards from the beach, stood in a line while the man gave the signal—one—two---

"Stop," cried Jack—"stop."

The men paused.

"What will you promise if I take you on board?"

"To do our duty cheerfully till we join the ship, and then be hung as an example to all mutineers," replied the men.

"Dat very fair," replied Mesty; "take dem at their word, Massa Easy."

"Very well," replied Jack, "I accept your conditions; and we will come for you."

Jack and Mesty hauled up the boat, stuck their pistols in their belts, and pulled to the shore. The men, as they stepped in, touched their hats respectfully to our hero, but said nothing. On their arrival on board, Jack read that part of the articles of war relative to mutiny, by which the men were reminded of the very satisfactory fact, "that they were to suffer death"; and then made a speech which, to men who were starving, appeared to be interminable. However, there is an end to everything in this world, and so there was to Jack's harangue; after which Mesty gave them some biscuit, which they devoured in thankfulness, until they could get something better. The next morning the wind was fair, they weighed their kedge with some difficulty, and ran out of the harbour: the men appeared very contrite, worked well, but in silence, for they had no very pleasant anticipations; but hope always remains with us; and each of the men, although he had no doubt but that the others would be hung, hoped that he would escape with a sound flogging. The wind, however, did not allow them to steer their course long; before night it was contrary, and they fell off three points to the northward. "However," as Jack observed, "at all events we shall make the Spanish coast, and then we must run down it to Gibraltar: I don't care—I understand navigation much better than I did." The next morning they found themselves with a very light breeze, under a high cape, and, as the sun rose, they observed a large vessel in-shore, about two miles

to the westward of them, and another outside, about four miles off. Mesty took the glass and examined the one outside, which, on a sudden, had let fall all her canvas, and was now running for the shore, steering for the cape under which Jack's vessel lay. Mesty put down the glass.

"Massa Easy—I tink dat de *Harpy*."

One of the seamen took the glass and examined her, while the others who stood by showed great agitation.

"Yes, it is the *Harpy*," said the seaman. "Oh! Mr. Easy, will you forgive us?" continued the man, and he and the others fell on their knees. "Do not tell all, for God's sake, Mr. Easy."

Jack's heart melted; he looked at Mesty.

"I tink," said Mesty, apart to our hero, "dat with what them hab suffer already, suppose they get *seven dozen a-piece*, dat quite enough."

Jack thought that even half that punishment would suffice; so he told the men, that although he must state what had occurred, he would not tell all, and would contrive to get them off as well as he could. He was about to make a long speech, but a gun from the *Harpy*, which had now come up within range, made him defer it till a more convenient opportunity. At the same time the vessel in-shore hoisted Spanish colours and fired a gun.

"By de powers but we got in the middle of it," cried Mesty; "*Harpy* tink us Spaniard. Now, my lads, get all gun ready, bring up powder and shot. Massa, now us fire at Spaniard—*Harpy* not fire at us—no ab English colours on board—dat all we must do."

The men set to with a will; the guns were all loaded, and were soon cast loose and primed, during which operations it fell calm, and the sails of all three vessels flapped against their masts. The *Harpy* was then about two miles from Jack's vessel, and the Spaniard about a mile from him, with all her boats ahead of her, towing towards him; Mesty examined the Spanish vessel.

"Dat man-of-war, Massa Easy—what de debbel we do for colour? must hoist someting."

Mesty ran down below; he recollected that there was a very gay petticoat, which had been left by the old lady who was in

the vessel when they captured her. It was of green silk, with yellow and blue flowers, but very faded. Mesty had found it under the mattress of one of the beds, and had put it into his bag, intending probably to cut it up into waistcoats. He soon appeared with this under his arm, made it fast to the peak halyards and hoisted it up.

"Dere, Massa, dat do very well—dat what you call '*all nation colour*.' Everybody strike him flag to dat—men nebber pull it down," said Mesty, "anyhow. Now den, ab hoist colour, we fire away—mind you only fire one gun at a time, and point um well, den ab time to load again."

"She's hoisted her colours, sir," said Sawbridge, on board of the *Harpy*; "but they do not show out clear, and it's impossible to distinguish them; but there's a gun."

"It's not at us, sir," said Gascoigne, the midshipman; "it's at the Spanish vessel—I saw the shot fall ahead of her."

"It must be a privateer," said Captain Wilson; "at all events, it is very fortunate, for the corvette would otherwise have been towed into Carthage. Another gun, round and grape, and well pointed too; she carries heavy metal, that craft: she must be a Maltese privateer."

"That's as much as to say that she's a pirate," replied Sawbridge; "I can make nothing of her colours—they appear to me to be green—she must be a Turk. Another gun—and devilish well aimed; it has hit the boats."

"Yes, they are all in confusion: we will have her now, if we can only get a trifle of wind. That is a breeze coming up in the offing. Trim the sails, Mr. Sawbridge."

The yards were squared, and the *Harpy* soon had steerage-way. In the meantime Jack and his few men had kept up a steady, well-directed, although slow, fire with their larboard guns upon the Spanish corvette; and two of her boats had been disabled. The *Harpy* brought the breeze up with her, and was soon within range; she steered to cut off the corvette, firing only on her bow-chasers.

"We ab her now," cried Mesty; "fire away—men, take good aim. Breeze come now; one man go to helm. By de power what dat?"

The exclamation of Mesty was occasioned by a shot hulling

the ship on the starboard side. Jack and he ran over, and perceived that three Spanish gun-boats had just made their appearance round the point, and had attacked them. The fact was, that on the other side of the cape was the port and town of Carthage, and these gun-boats had been sent out to the assistance of the corvette. The ship had now caught the breeze, fortunately for Jack, or he would probably have been taken into Carthage; and the corvette, finding herself cut off by both the *Harpy* and Jack's vessel, as soon as the breeze came up to her, put her head the other way, and tried to escape by running westward along the coast close in-shore. Another shot, and then another, pierced the hull of the ship, and wounded two of Jack's men; but as the corvette had turned, and the *Harpy* followed her, of course Jack did the same, and in ten minutes he was clear of the gun-boats, who did not venture to make sail and stand after him. The wind now freshened fast, and blew out the green petticoat, but the *Harpy* was exchanging broadsides with the corvette, and too busy to look after Jack's ensign. The Spaniard defended himself well, and had the assistance of the batteries as he passed, but there was no anchorage until he had run many miles further. About noon, the wind died away, and at one o'clock it again fell nearly calm; but the *Harpy* had neared her distance, and was now within three cables' length of her antagonist, engaging her and a battery of four guns. Jack came up again, for he had the last of the breeze, and was about half a mile from the corvette when it fell calm. By the advice of Mesty, he did not fire any more, as otherwise the *Harpy* would not obtain so much credit, and it was evident that the fire of the Spaniard slackened fast. At three o'clock the Spanish colours were hauled down, and the *Harpy*, sending a boat on board and taking possession, directed her whole fire upon the battery, which was soon silenced.

The calm continued, and the *Harpy* was busy enough with the prize, shifting the prisoners and refitting both vessels, which had very much suffered in the sails and rigging. There was an occasional wonder on board the *Harpy* what that strange vessel might be, who had turned the corvette and enabled them to capture her, but when people are all very busy, there is not much time for surmise.

Jack's crew, with himself, consisted but of eight, one of which was a Spaniard, and two were wounded. It therefore left him but four, and he had also something to do, which was to assist his wounded men, and secure his guns. Moreover, Mesty did not think it prudent to leave the vessel a mile from the *Harpy* with only two on board; besides, as Jack said, he had had no dinner, and was not quite sure that he should find anything to eat when he went into the midshipmen's berth; he would therefore have some dinner cooked, and eat it before he went on board; in the meantime, they would try and close with her. Jack took things always very easy, and he said he should report himself at sunset. There were other reasons which made Jack in no very great hurry to go on board; he wanted to have time to consider a little, what he should say to excuse himself, and also how he should plead for the men. His natural correctness of feeling decided him, in the first place, to tell the whole truth; and in the next, his kind feelings determined him to tell only part of it. Jack need not have given himself this trouble, for, as far as regarded himself, he had fourteen thousand good excuses in the bags that lay in the state-room; and as for the men, after an action with the enemy, if they behave well, even mutiny is forgiven. At last, Jack, who was tired with excitement and the hard work of the day, thought and thought until he fell fast asleep, and instead of waking at sunset, did not wake till two hours afterwards; and Mesty did not call him, because he was in no hurry himself to go on board "*and boil de kettle for de young gentlemen.*"

When Jack woke up, he was astonished to find that he had slept so long; he went on deck; it was dark and still calm, but he could easily perceive that the *Harpy* and corvette were still hove-to, repairing damages. He ordered the men to lower down the small boat, and leaving Mesty in charge, with two oars he pulled to the *Harpy*. What with wounded men, with prisoners, and boats going and coming between the vessels, everyone on board the *Harpy* were well employed; and in the dark, Jack's little boat came alongside without notice. This should not have been the case, but it was, and there was some excuse for it. Jack ascended the side, and pushed his way through the prisoners, who were being mustered to be victualled. He was

wrapped up in one of the gregos, and many of the prisoners wore the same.

Jack was amused at not being recognized; he slipped down the main ladder, and had to stoop under the hammocks of the wounded men, and was about to go aft to the captain's cabin to report himself, when he heard young Gossett crying out, and the sound of the rope. "Hang me, if that brute Vigors ain't thrashing young Gossett," thought Jack. "I daresay the poor fellow has had plenty of it since I have been away; I'll save him this time, at least." Jack, wrapped up in his grego, went to the window of the berth, looked in, and found it was as he expected. He cried out in an angry voice, *Mr. Vigors, I'll thank you to leave Gossett alone.* At the sound of the voice, Vigors turned round with his colt in his hand, saw Jack's face at the window, and, impressed with the idea that the re-appearance was supernatural, uttered a yell and fell down in a fit—little Gossett also, trembling in every limb, stared with his mouth open. Jack was satisfied, and immediately disappeared. He then went aft to the cabin, pushed by the servant, who was giving some orders from the captain to the officer on deck, and entering the cabin, where the captain was seated with two Spanish officers, took off his hat and said—

"Come on board, Captain Wilson."

Captain Wilson did not fall down in a fit, but he jumped up, and upset the glass before him.

"Merciful God, Mr. Easy, where did you come from?"

"From that ship astern, sir," replied Jack.

"That ship astern! what is she? --where have you been so long?"

"It's a long story, sir," replied Jack.

Captain Wilson extended his hand and shook Jack's heartily.

"At all events, I'm delighted to see you, boy: now sit down and tell me your story in a few words; we will have it in detail by-and-bye."

"If you please, sir," said Jack, "we captured that ship with the cutter the night after we went away—I'm not a first-rate navigator, and I was blown to the Zaffarine Islands, where I remained two months for want of hands: as soon as I procured them I made sail again—I have lost three men by sharks, and

I have two wounded in today's fight—the ship mounts twelve guns, is half laden with lead and cotton prints, has fourteen thousand dollars in the cabin, and three shot-holes right through her—and the sooner you send some people on board of her the better.”

This was not very intelligible, but that there were fourteen thousand dollars and that she required hands sent on board, was very satisfactorily explained. Captain Wilson rang the bell, sent for Mr. Asper, who started back at the sight of our hero—desired him to order Mr. Jolliffe to go on board with one of the cutters, send the wounded men on board, and take charge of the vessel, and then told Jack to accompany Mr. Jolliffe, and to give him every information.